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NICK CARTER STORIES

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

AN ENGLISH CRACKSMAN

THE DETECTIVE TOOK UP ONE OF THE RUBBERS TO EXAMINE IT.

STREET & SMITH PUBLISHERS NEW YORK

NICK CARTER STORIES

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AN ENGLISH CRACKSMAN;

Or, NICK CARTER'S RECORD ROUND-UP.

Edited by CHICKERING CARTER.

CHAPTER I.

AN EARLY CALL.

Nick Carter was sleeping soundly when the call came. The tall, old-fashioned clock in the main hall of his Madison Avenue residence, in New York, was just striking six.

Mingling with the six mellow notes of the slow-striking bell came a more shrill and penetrating ring, that of a telephone on a stand near the head of the detective's bed.

It rang insistently, noisily on the still morning air. It was like a tocsin, a suggestion of terrible danger, or the frantic appeal of one in direful distress.

Nick started up in bed, wide awake in an instant. He reached out and seized the telephone, clapping the receiver to his ear.

"Hello!" he said sharply.

The voice of a man responded, a voice shaken with excitement, impatience, and haste.

"Hello! I want to talk with Nick Carter as quickly as possible. Is he at home and up? If not——"

"You are talking to Nick Carter," interrupted the detective. "Who are you? What do you want?"

"I am Professor Percival Curzon—you remember me, Nick?"

"Yes, indeed."

"I am at the Washington Heights home of my brother-in-law, Henry Varney, the banker and stockbroker. Do you know his place?"

"Yes. What's the trouble?"

"A terrible crime has been committed. The house safe has been robbed, a lot of bonds and jewelry stolen, and the butler nearly killed. I am phoning for Mr. Varney, who is just out of bed. He wants you to come up here at once with some of your assistants. Will you do so? Will you come as quickly as possible?"

"I will be there in half an hour. In the meantime tell Mr. Varney to see that none of the evidence is disturbed," said Nick.

"I will do so," Professor Curzon hurriedly replied. "I will attend to it myself."

Nick sprang out of bed and began to dress, at the same time shouting a hurry-up call to Chick Carter and Patsy Garvan, his two chief assistants, and also ringing for his touring car and chauffeur.

It was nothing unusual for the Carters to turn out early in this precipitous fashion, for which they were always prepared, and scarce ten minutes had passed when the three detectives left the house and sprang into their speedy motor.

"Washington Heights, Danny," Nick said tersely, to his chauffeur. "The Henry Varney residence. Do you know the place?"

"Sure thing, Mr. Carter. It's one of the finest in that section."

"Let her go lively, then," said Nick.

They already were speeding away, as Nick seated himself in one corner of the tonneau, with Chick in the other. Patsy sat in front, with Danny.

"What did you learn from Professor Curzon?" Chick inquired, Nick having had no time till then to inform the others concerning the mission. "Isn't he the archæologist from whom we recovered a stolen antique volume some time ago?"

"Yes, the same," Nick nodded. "The Villeneuve volume, stolen by the Andy Drake and Nat Garrick combination, the founders of the big crook league that we put out of commission months ago."

"Gee! It's not often we get up against that kind of a bunch!" exclaimed Patsy, who had turned to listen. "We never canned a much worse gang."

"True," Nick admitted. "Drake was a genius at devising crimes along new and original lines and an expert in directing a big gang of crooks. But he will trouble us no more. He and all of his gang are in Sing Sing, with the exception of that remarkably clever female running mate of his."

"Celeste Durelle."

"The same. The jade gave us the slip after having woolly-eyed that Scotland Yard inspector, Tom Denny, enabling Drake to abduct that English peer, Lord Amadon, under the inspector's very nose."

"She is a clever one, all right," said Patsy. "It would be worth while to know what became of her after she bolted from the Crawford."

"She probably hiked back to England, or France, to ply her infernal trade on a more familiar stamping ground," Chick observed. "But those are affairs of the past, Nick. What has happened to Varney?"

"House safe robbed, butler nearly killed, and a lot of bonds and jewelry stolen," Nick said tersely. "That's all I learned from Curzon."

"Henry Varney—he's the multimillionaire banker and stockbroker. Are you acquainted with him?"

"Yes, quite well acquainted. He married a sister of Professor Curzon and lived in Fifth Avenue before building the splendid mansion he now occupies. Curzon, who is a bachelor, has lived with the family for years. His sister was Varney's first wife."

"Is there any family?"

"A very creditable one, Teddy would say," said Nick, with a smile. "Varney has quite a young wife, his second, by the way, and several daughters, but no sons. Two of the girls are married and live abroad. The only one by his first wife now living at home is Clara Varney, who figures quite prominently in the smart set. She's a remarkably handsome girl in the twenties."

"I've seen pictures of her. She's frequently mugged by the press," said Chick, with professional inelegance.

"There are three children by his second wife, I believe, all quite young," Nick added. "Varney is a man over sixty."

"I've met him," Chick nodded. "I cannot say that I fancied him."

"He's not very agreeable," Nick replied. "He's exceedingly proud, and as arbitrary as a pirate. The two girls who married abroad never got along with him. He'd have his own way if wolves were growling at his door. He's as square as a die, however, which is some to his credit."

It was precisely half past six when they came in sight of the Varney residence, a superb stone mansion, occupying a most desirable site on Washington Heights, overlooking a broad sweep of the Hudson, that then glistened brightly in the rays of the morning sun.

The house stood well back from the avenue, occupying spacious and beautifully laid out grounds adorned with shrubbery, flower beds, and numerous fine old trees left from the original woodland. A costly granite wall flanked the front and one side of the extensive estate, while a picket fence divided it from a narrow, sparsely settled street in the rear, including a stable, garage, and several smaller outbuildings.

A physician's runabout, in the care of a chauffeur in livery, stood at the curbing in front of the house; but the grill gate of a broad driveway entrance was open, and Nick said to his chauffeur:

"Run up to the house, Danny, and under the porte-cochère. We evidently are not the first to arrive. A physician has been called to look after the injured butler."

Danny followed the instructions given him, and the car sped up the broad driveway and came to a stop under the massive porte-cochère beyond the break of a deep veranda, and protecting a side door of the palatial dwelling.

Professor Curzon, who had telephoned to Nick, came hurrying out to receive him. He was clad in a bath robe and slippers, and wore a look of dreadful dismay on his venerable face.

"Thank God you are here, Mr. Carter," he said, while Nick sprang out of the car, closely followed by Chick and Patsy. "Come in, come right in. I fear that Dawson is done for."

"Dawson is the butler?"

"Yes, poor fellow! Struck down by a brute who—but you can see for yourself. You know Mr. Varney, I believe. This is Doctor Graham, our family physician."

Nick had followed the speaker through the side hall and into the hall which ran directly through the house. Near the rear of it and the doors leading into the kitchen and to the butler's pantry, a partly clad man in middle life was lying on the floor.

Doctor Graham was bending over him, applying restoratives and making a hurried examination of the butler's injuries.

Mr. Varney stood near by, an imposing, dignified man of nearly sixty-five, with a strikingly strong and austere face, smoothly shaved, and with close-cut gray hair. He merely bowed to the detectives by way of greeting, saying to Nick, with a hard, metallic voice that seemed to confirm the comments made about him:

"Well, Carter, here's fine doings. What's to become of us when a house of this kind, provided with the most modern devices to prevent burglary, can be entered in the dead of the night, a faithful servant knocked out, a safe opened and robbed of half a million in bonds and jewels? Fine doings, indeed!"

"I agree with you, Mr. Varney," Nick replied. "By whom was the crime discovered?"

"By Maggie, the kitchen maid, when she came down from her room in the servants' quarters."

"About what time?"

"Just before six. She screamed, and Percival heard her," said Mr. Varney, with a somewhat supercilious glance at his elderly brother-in-law. "He found out what had occurred and then hastened to tell me. I directed him to telephone to you immediately, which he did. We have done nothing except to care for Dawson. Take charge of the case and send me your bill."

He spoke as if the detective had no alternative. He was meeting the calamity with the same stoical composure, a sort of apathetic aggressiveness and businesslike coldness, as he would have betrayed under any other circumstances a panic in stocks, the loss of a friend, or even a death in his family. He turned the case over to Nick,

as to one best qualified to handle it, and he apparently felt that nothing devolved upon him except to pay the detective's charges.

Nick Carter did not reply. If he resented the attitude of this money magnate, however, and found him quite disagreeable, he did not otherwise betray it. He did not lose sight of the fact that, a crime having been committed, his duty constrained him to seek the criminal and serve society and the law to the best of his ability. He turned to the physician and, bending nearer the stricken butler, asked quietly:

"Is he seriously injured, doctor?"

"Yes, a fractured skull."

"Fatally injured?"

"I cannot say at present," Doctor Graham replied. "An operation will be necessary. He must be removed to a hospital, the sooner the better."

"Have you sent for an ambulance?"

"Not yet. I wish you would do so, Mr. Carter."

'Attend to it, Patsy," said Nick, with a glance at his assistant. "Professor Curzon will take you to the telephone."

Nick turned again to the physician.

"Would it be possible to revive him, doctor, sufficiently to get a statement from him before his removal from the house?" he inquired.

Nick was led to think this might be done because Dawson occasionally moaned faintly, as if in pain under the examination made by the physician. He was lying flat on his back, only partly clad, as if he had arisen in haste and alarm, and very likely had discovered the crooks at work, by whom he presumably had been struck down. His face, neck, and linen were covered with blood, a pool of which soiled the costly rug on which he was lying.

"Possible, but not probable," Doctor Graham replied.

"Will you make the attempt?" Nick requested.

"Yes," and Doctor Graham, who arose and hurried out to his runabout for something he required for the purpose.

Nick briefly examined the butler's head, noting just how and from which direction the several blows had been dealt. He saw that he had been struck down nearly from behind, either with a slungshot or some kind of a heavy bludgeon. Rising after a moment, he turned to Mr. Varney and asked:

"Can you tell me any facts or circumstances relating to the crime?"

"None whatever," said Varney. "I know only that the library safe has been robbed and Dawson found as you see him. I expect you to discover the criminals and, if possible, the stolen property. Spare no expense in order to do so."

"Where is Dawson's room located?"

"On this floor, between the side hall and the butler's pantry," said Varney. "It is entered from the side hall."

Doctor Graham lost no time in taking the necessary steps. The powerful stimulants he administered did not have the effect for which Nick had hoped, that of reviving the man sufficiently for him to make an intelligible statement. They affected him in so far, however, that he soon began to groan and sigh, with occasional audible mutterings, obviously having some bearing upon the crime.

Nick Carter bowed over him and listened to the broken, desultory phrases that came from his gray, blood-flecked lips.

"I know it—I heard—stand back! Thieves in the house! Robbers are—my head—oh, my head! They are breaking into—help! The police—call the police! Ha! I've got you—got you! I've got——"

His feeble voice sank even lower for an instant, and then it broke forth as if under a frantic, convulsive effort, as if a sudden terrible frenzy possessed the unconscious man, and his startling words were mingled with a cry that filled every corner of the hall and the adjoining rooms.

"Ha! I know—he's a woman! He's a woman!"

The cry ended with a gasp and a gurgling of red froth from the butler's mouth.

Doctor Graham quickly shook his head.

"This won't do, Mr. Carter; it won't do," he hurriedly protested. "It may cost him his life."

Nick signified with a gesture that the experiment should go no farther.

Professor Curzon came hurrying in through the side hall, followed by an ambulance surgeon and two attendants, and Dawson was hastily raised and carried from the house.

CHAPTER II.

THE ELECTRIC DRILL.

Nick Carter's inquiries in the hall, followed by the hurried removal of the butler, had transpired in a very few minutes. In the meantime, nevertheless, a group of servants had appeared at the kitchen door, gazing with awed eyes and pale faces at the tragic scene. Two women had come down the main stairway, moreover, halting in the front of the hall when they saw the physician and the three detectives.

One was Clara Varney, a tall, finely formed woman of twenty-five, with a classical cast of features and a pale complexion. Her thin lips and square chin resembled those of her father, denoting that she inherited some of his traits of character, including willfulness and pride.

Her companion was the governess employed by Varney to care for his three young children, the eldest still under five. She was about the same build as Clara Varney, but a distinctly opposite type—a pronounced brunette, with black hair, heavy brows, a dark, velvety complexion, and a strong and remarkably handsome face.

Nick Carter merely glanced at the two women, then at the group of servants. He turned quickly to Mr. Varney and said:

"Where is the library? I will begin an investigation. Tell your servants to return to their rooms, and your family not to come down here until after I have looked over the evidence. I want nothing disturbed in the house or out of it before I have finished. Do so at once, Mr. Varney, and rejoin me in the library."

Nick spoke in a way that compelled obedience, and he did not wait for an answer. He signed for Chick and Patsy to follow him, then hastened into the library, to the open door of which Varney had pointed.

It was a large, handsomely furnished room adjoining the side hall. A broad French window opened upon the side veranda, commanding a view of a portion of the grounds and the near porte-cochère. It was closed and locked.

The library safe was set into one of the shelved walls,

and ordinarily it was concealed by a section of carved wainscoting. The latter was open, also the safe itself. A rug in front of it was covered with bits of steel, fallen from a drill, and the lower part of the safe was wet with oil.

On the floor near by lay several tools, also a curious contrivance, which immediately claimed Nick Carter's attention. It was a mechanism set in a steel frame about ten inches square, over which was adjusted a rubber hood. Attached to it was a long, insulated wire, the other end of which was adjusted to one of the arms of an electric chandelier.

Nick hastened to pick up this portable piece of machinery and examine it.

"By Jove, this looks like the work of professionals, for fair," he remarked, as Chick and Patsy joined him.

"What do you make of it?" Chick asked, gazing at the complicated machinery set into the hooded frame.

"It speaks for itself," Nick replied. "I read a description of it about a year ago in a London scientific journal, sent to me from Scotland Yard."

"What is it?"

"It is a powerful electric drill, which can be operated by means of a current taken from an ordinary electric light. This frame sets close to the safe door, and the rubber hood covering the whole business prevents the escape of the slightest sound when the drill is at work. One precisely like it, I judge, was found on the scene of a London burglary. A description of it then was published."

"It is a complicated affair, surely."

"It is the invention of an English cracksman, Andy Drake, who is known to have done the London job—but who could not have had a hand in this one," Nick dryly added.

"The dickens!" Chick exclaimed. "You're right about his not having figured in this job. He is in Sing Sing."

"But we might be up against a member of his gang," put in Patsy.

"That is precisely whom we are up against," said Nick.

"Some English cracksman?"

"Or crackswoman."

"Woman be hanged!" Chick said shortly. "No woman could have done this job."

"A woman had a hand in it."

"Are you sure?"

"Positively. You heard what Dawson said. Obviously, Chick, his unconscious mutterings related to what occurred just before he was knocked out," Nick explained. "He was awakened by something and suspected that thieves were in the house. He slipped on some clothing and left his room to look into the matter. He discovered something that would have caused him to call the police. That idea still was in his mind and gave rise to his mutterings. His discovery must have been made just as he was struck down, however, since no alarm was given."

"By Jove, I guess you're right."

"You heard the last cry that broke from him so forcibly. It was like a cry of intense amazement."

"The amazement he felt just before he was knocked out?"

"Exactly. His words were: 'He's a woman!'" said Nick. "How must we interpret such a remark, such an anomaly? The pronoun he used is masculine, yet the person to whom it was applied must have been a woman, a fact which he evidently unexpectedly discovered, and which naturally would explain his amazement."

"By Jove, that is deucedly strange," said Patsy. "Why did he use the masculine pronoun, if he knew he was speaking of a woman? I'm blessed if I can fathom it."

"His remarks admit of only one interpretation," said Nick. "Dawson encountered some one in the darkness, or in a dim light, whom he supposed was a man. Coming in contact with the person, however, possibly grappling with her, he discovered that the person was a woman. Obviously, then, she must have been in male attire. That explains the cry of amazement, uttered in his semiconscious condition: 'he's a woman!'"

"All right again, Nick," Chick quickly admitted. "There's no getting around it."

"And that's why I am sure that a woman had a hand in this job," Nick added. "Furthermore, I think I can name the woman."

"Celeste Durelle?"

"None other."

"But why do you suspect her?"

"Because she is the only woman to be consistently connected with a burglary in which this electric drill figures," Nick pointed out. "It was invented by Andy Drake and used by him in London. Celeste Durelle has been closely associated with him in numerous crimes, and was a member of the crook league which he organized.

"She is the woman most likely, then, to have known where one of these machines could be found, and since she is known to have recently been in New York, and since Dawson's words plainly indicate that a woman figured in this robbery, it is only reasonable to infer that Celeste Durelle was the woman."

"That's right, too," Chick again admitted. "We are lucky to have made this discovery. It provides us with one clew, at least, to the identity of the crooks."

"A very reliable clew," said Nick. "We'll see what more we can find."

"Here's one point to be noted, chief," said Patsy, who had begun a closer inspection of the safe.

"What's that?"

"Only the interior door has been drilled. The safe evidently was opened by means of the combination."

"H'm, is that so?" said Nick, approaching to examine it. "You are right, Patsy. This sheds, indeed, another light on the case. We not only are up against a very cleverly committed burglary, but against a mystery, as well."

"Mystery?" Mr. Varney entered at that moment, echoing the word inquiringly, with a look of surprise on his austere white face. "What do you mean by that, Mr. Carter? I hope you are not blundering at the outset. I see nothing mysterious in knavery of this kind, the like of which occurs almost daily."

"One would not expect you to see it, Mr. Varney," Nick answered, a bit sharply. "It is out of your line. You have employed me to see it, sir, and to investigate it, which I propose to do in my own way and without interference—or not at all."

The magnate stood and stared for a moment. He was not accustomed to being thus addressed, and a wave of red appeared in his cheeks. He drew back a little, then wilted perceptibly and said, in assuasive tones:

"Certainly, certainly, Mr. Carter, by all means. I do not mean to interfere, not for the world, and I place the case entirely in your hands. Do the best you can with

it and I shall be perfectly satisfied. Command me, too, if I can be of any assistance."

"Gee!" thought Patsy, suppressing a grin. "He knows when he gets a call-down, all right. Let the chief alone to puncture a man's tire when he puts up too chesty a front."

"Very well," Nick replied, with a quick nod. "I will take the case, Mr. Varney, under those conditions, and you can be of immediate assistance. I want you to answer a few questions."

"As many as you wish," said Varney, quite humbly.

CHAPTER III.

THE PRINT OF A BUTTON.

"To begin with, Mr. Varney," said Nick, taking out his notebook and pencil, "give me the names of your entire household. Omit none except your three small children, who are too young to have figured in this crime."

"Do you not exclude other members of my family?" Mr. Varney demanded, frowning. "Only a madman would suspect one of them."

"Don't delay me with objections, Mr. Varney," said Nick. "I at present am only seeking information, not forming suspicions."

Mr. Varney complied, still frowning.

"My family consists of my wife, Marion, my daughter, Clara, and Professor Curzon," said he.

"And the servants?"

"I employ a governess, Theresa Dale; a butler, James Dawson; a cook, named Mary Foley; and three girls for general work, whose names are Maggie, Nellie, and Jane. I don't know their last names. My chauffeur, Robert Keene, and a gardener and man for general outside work, one Peter Grady, have rooms in the stable."

Nick entered each name in his notebook.

"You know that your servants are honest, I infer, or you would not employ them?" he remarked.

"Yes, certainly. All have been in my service for a long time and came well recommended. I am sure they are trustworthy. Dawson has been my butler for twenty years."

"Does he usually close the house at night?"

"Invariably."

"What is his custom?"

"The servants are always in before eleven o'clock. If any of the family is out, Dawson waits up till all have returned. Otherwise, as was the case last night, he locks the house at eleven o'clock and sets the burglar alarm. He did so last night, for I was up later than usual and saw him performing his duties."

"At eleven o'clock?"

"Yes. He tested the alarm and found it in proper condition. After that hour, if any door or window below the second floor was opened, the alarm should have rung. Obviously, however, it was tampered with after Dawson set it, and it failed to work."

"Can any part of it be reached from outside?"

"No."

"It must, then, have been put out of commission by some one in the house," said Nick.

"I cannot believe that, Mr. Carter," Varney quickly protested. "I am sure that no inmate of my house would be guilty of this crime. Dawson may accidentally have put the alarm out of order while testing it. I know he would not have done it intentionally."

"Where is the battery located?"

"In the basement."

"I presently will examine it," said Nick. "You noticed, of course, that the outside door of your safe has not been drilled. It either was found unlocked by the burglars, or they must have opened it by means of the combination."

"Both seem utterly improbable," said Varney. "I know that the safe was properly locked last evening, for I put a quantity of bonds in it, which I had had occasion to examine. I closed the door and scattered the combination, as usual, and I also closed the wainscot panel which masks the safe. The panel is opened by means of a hidden spring, operated by pressing this acorn in the carving. Only three persons in the house, or so I have supposed, knew that the safe was here and how to open it."

"What three persons?"

"My wife, my daughter, and myself. We never open the safe when other persons are in the room, nor without taking the precaution to close the library door. I would not have believed that any other person knew of the existence of the safe."

"Except, of course, the workmen who put it here," Nick corrected. "We may have to hark back to them in order to track our game. Your wife and daughter, you say, know the combination of the safe?"

"Yes."

"Both are above suspicion, of course, and the combination must have been discovered by some fourth party, who was in league with the crooks. Is there a memorandum of the combination numbers anywhere in the house, which a treacherous servant could have discovered?"

"No, indeed! I am sure of it," said Varney, quickly shaking his head. "There is no need for anything of the kind."

Nick did not reply for a moment. He gazed thoughtfully at the looted safe, at the electric drill, and the oil and shavings on the rug. He appeared to be considering what course would be the wise one for him to take. Presently looking up, he said abruptly:

"That is all just now, Mr. Varney. While I am looking farther, however, I want you to call your family and all of your servants into the parlor, where I will question them. Do not infer from this, sir, that I suspect any person in the house, despite that the evidence is somewhat suggestive. I merely wish to have a look at all who were here last night and to ask a few questions. Call all of them to the parlor at once, therefore, since time may be of value. I will presently come there and question them."

Mr. Varney made no objection, though the frown still lingered on his stern face when he left the room.

"Gee! it looks like an inside job, chief, for fair," Patsy Garvan said quietly.

"Unless one of the crooks stole into the house during yesterday and was concealed here when Dawson set the alarm," Nick replied. "He then could have put it out of commission and admitted his confederates."

"That's true."

"Find out from Professor Curzon where the battery is located. If you find it in working order, Patsy, trace the wires and see whether they have been tampered

with. Let me know what you discover. In the meantime, Chick, we'll seek evidence showing where the crooks entered the house."

While Patsy hastened to follow the directions given him, Nick led the way through the side hall and out of doors. There he began a careful inspection of the ground under the porte-cochère and the several windows.

His search at first proved futile. In a flower bed flanking the wall under one of the dining-room windows, however, Nick found evidence worthy of his attention.

There were numerous footprints in the dark soil, also bits of stone and damp cement, while the wall directly under the window showed that it had very recently been repaired. Crouching to examine the footprints, Nick made a quite curious discovery.

It appeared at first sight to be merely a dent in a patch of cement between two of the stones forming the wall. It was perfectly round and about half an inch in diameter. It presented one feature, moreover, so like that of a seal that Nick hastened to examine it with a small, powerful lens which he always carried.

"By Jove, here's an odd clew, if such it proves to be," he remarked to Chick, who stood watching him.

"What do you make of it?"

"It's the imprint of a button, evidently on the coat of a man who was standing close to the wall, as if trying to look through the window."

"H'm, is that so?" Chick bent nearer and studied the impression.

"The cement still is quite damp. These repairs evidently were completed yesterday afternoon. Here are prints of the workman's boots—yes, by Jove, and here are others."

"There seems to be three different imprints."

"Precisely," Nick nodded. "These formed by the boots of the workman, moreover, are partly obliterated by the others, showing that two persons were here after he left. He must have finished this job late yesterday, or the cement would not be so damp, and the others may have been here during the night."

"That appears to be a safe gamble, Nick, under the circumstances."

"Notice these fine lines in one of the imprints. It is that of a woman's foot, and she was wearing rubbers, or sandals. Here, close to the wall, are indentations made by the soles of the man's shoes. Notice that there is no mark of his heels."

"From which you deduce?"

"That the man was standing on his toes in order to look through the window. Stretching up for that purpose, he naturally pressed against the wall, and one of the buttons of his coat was imbedded in the cement, which then was moist enough to receive the impression. Do you see anything curious about it? Examine it with my lens."

Chick took the glass and did so, presently exclaiming:

"By Jove, it is marked with an anchor!"

"Exactly," said Nick. "The button evidently was on the garment of a sailor, or a naval officer. It seems reasonable to infer, moreover, if he was spying at this window, that he was one of the crooks. That is further confirmed by the fact that a woman, also, was here, presumably his confederate."

"The woman mentioned by Dawson?"

"Most likely."

"But she, you think, was in male attire?"

"A woman clad as a man might wear rubbers."

"True."

"Here's another point," said Nick: "If this was an inside job, as Patsy termed it, the woman may have been in the house. The man may have come to this window to signal her, and she may have admitted him and his confederates."

"That appears more than probable."

"We'll try to clinch it," said Nick. "While I am questioning the family and servants in the parlor, you steal up to the room occupied by the women. Try to find a pair of rubbers corresponding in size with this imprint. Don't remove them, in case you succeed, but learn to whom they belong and quietly inform me."

"I'm wise," Chick nodded.

"We'll set about it at once."

Their conversation had been carried on in subdued tones, and Nick had been furtively watching the windows most of the time. He felt sure that they had not been observed, and he now returned with Chick to the side hall. Upon entering it, they found Patsy on his knees in a corner back of the door.

"I've found it, chief," he said quickly, looking up.

"Why the alarm failed to work?"

"That's what. The battery is all right, but this wire leading up from it has been cut. See for yourself."

Nick stooped and examined it. He saw that the wire mentioned came up through the floor and ran back of a molding over the baseboard. It was visible only where the turn was made, and there it had been cut and the severed ends separated.

"Good work, Patsy," Nick said approvingly. "Plainly enough there's a traitor in the house. I think we shall presently find her."

There was an ominous gleam in his eyes when, leaving Chick to follow the instructions given him, Nick strode through the main hall and entered the parlor.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BANKER'S DAUGHTER.

Chick Carter lost no time in following Nick's instructions. He stole through the rear hall and up the servants' stairway, reaching a landing on the second floor, from which he could see the open doors of several chambers.

He paused and listened for a moment. Not a sound came from either room, and, bent upon covering the ground as quickly as possible, Chick stole into the nearest chamber.

A glance told him it was Clara Varney's. The windows were open and the lace draperies swaying in the morning air. Some discarded garments were lying on a chair, and the several pairs of shoes on the floor of an open wardrobe closet quickly caught Chick's eye.

Crouching in the doorway of the wardrobe closet, he had discovered what he was seeking. Tossed in a corner back of the shoe was a pair of rubbers, nearly new, on the soles of which were particles of dark earth, obviously that of a flower bed. In size and shape, moreover, they were precisely like the imprints found by Nick scarce five minutes before.

Chick took up one of the rubbers to examine it, only to drop it as if it had been a hot coal. Quick steps and the rustle of skirts in the near hall warned him that a

woman was approaching. He sprang up and thrust both hands into his pockets, then sauntered toward the door—just as the woman appeared on the threshold.

It was not Clara Varney, as he was expecting, but the governess, whom he had seen in the lower hall. As quick as a flash, moreover, much to his surprise, she covered him with a revolver.

"Don't move, or I'll shoot," she said sternly, with eyes gleaming under her knit brows. "What do you want here?"

"Well, I want nothing tangible," Chick coolly replied. "I really would like, however, to have you state why you hold me up in this fashion?"

"Because you are a thief—one of the thieves! You are——"

"You are wrong," Chick interrupted. "I am after the thieves, not one of them. I'm a detective, one of Nick Carter's assistants. He now is in the parlor. Call him up and verify my statements. I saw you in the lower hall half an hour ago. You should have seen me."

"I was there—but I did not see you."

"You are the governess, aren't you?"

"Yes—Theresa Dale."

The fire in her frowning eyes had begun to wane. She appeared to realize that she had made a mistake. As if still a little incredulous, however, she kept Chick covered, and asked:

"If you are assisting Mr. Carter, who now is in the parlor, what are you doing here? What do you want in Miss Varney's sleeping room?"

"I am trying to find out whether the burglars entered through any of the second-story windows," Chick readily explained. "I wish to examine those in the other rooms, also, providing that you have no objection. Will you kindly put that gun where you found it?"

The last was dryly added and seemed to dispel the woman's distrust. She laughed a bit nervously, displaying a double row of sharp, white teeth, and then she lowered the weapon.

"I guess I owe you an apology," she said, shrugging her shoulders. "The revolver belongs to Mr. Varney and is kept in his bureau drawer."

"How came you to have it?"

"That is easily explained," she replied. "I was in the nursery when you stole through the hall and entered this room. I happened to see you, and thought you came down the back stairs. I imagined you were one of the burglars and had been hiding in the attic. I supposed you came here to steal something more, Miss Varney's money, or jewels. So I crept into Mr. Varney's room and got his revolver, intending to keep you here until Mr. Carter could arrest you."

"Well, well, that explains it," said Chick. "But why were you not in the parlor? Mr. Varney was directed to call all of the servants down there."

"I was going down just as I saw you," Theresa glibly answered. "I was dressing the children when Mr. Varney told me I was wanted, and I had to finish doing so. A woman having charge of three small children, you know, cannot always respond promptly to the beck and call of others."

"I see," said Chick.

"I will now replace the weapon and go down," she added. "If you wish to examine the windows of Mr. Varney's room, you may accompany me."

Chick thought he detected a subtle irony in her voice, but he could not be sure of it. He followed her to a handsomely furnished front room, where he made a perfunctory examination of the two windows, while the woman dropped the revolver into a bureau drawer. She stood waiting, gazing at him, when he turned from the window.

"Can I be of any further service?"

Chick eyed her a bit sharply. There was something about her he did not quite fancy, despite her dark beauty, something that gave him a vague impression of having seen her before. He could not recall when and where, however, and dismissed the vague idea. He shook his head and replied:

"No, I think not. I will go to the parlor with you."

Theresa Dale led the way from the room and down the stairs.

Chick's face when he entered the room did not denote that he had made any discovery. He found Nick engaged in questioning the servants, all of whom then were in the room, but the detective's inquiries had elicited only general denials of any knowledge of the crime, or of the circumstances involving it.

Keenly sizing up the servants, moreover, Nick could detect in none of them any sign warranting suspicion. He turned and merely glanced at the governess, when she entered, and Chick joined him and quietly whispered:

"I found them in Clara Varney's closet."

Nick heard him without a change of countenance. The significance of the discovery, however, was not to be ignored. It seemed, in view of the other evidence and circumstances, to indicate that Clara Varney knew something about the crime, and that she was in some way involved in it. On the other hand, however, it seemed utterly absurd to suppose that a girl of her character and social standing had deliberately conspired to rob her own father.

Nick appreciated, also, the delicate nature of the situation. He felt that he could not wisely press the girl with questions unless provided with positive evidence of her guilt, and he took the only consistent course. He at once ended his inquiries, and surprised all observers by saying abruptly:

"That's all, Mr. Varney. In spite of the mysterious circumstances, I now am convinced that no one in your house was even inadvertently a party to this crime. I must seek elsewhere for evidence showing how the burglars entered, and how the combination of your safe was discovered."

"I told you that, Carter, in the beginning," Mr. Varney coldly answered.

Nick had another object in thus denying his suspicions: that of furtively watching the suspected girl.

She had been standing alone near one of the windows, apparently with only an indifferent interest in the detective's inquiries. She twice had drawn aside the costly draperies and gazed out over the sunlit grounds, as if the proceedings bored her; but all the while her strong, clean-cut face was nearly destitute of color, her brows moodily knit, and her lips as gray and drawn as if from illness.

Furtively watching her when he ended his inquiries and announced that he suspected no person in the house, Nick saw a look of relief leap up in her eyes, an expression that would ordinarily have clinched his suspicions. He could not lose sight of the fact, however, that this girl was a daughter of the man who had been robbed.

He turned and whispered to Chick:

"Go out to the car with Patsy and wait until I come."

Chick nodded and left the room, followed by Professor Curzon.

Varney had dismissed the servants and was conducting his wife to her chamber.

Theresa Dale was returning to the nursery.

The only person then remaining with Nick in the parlor was the girl who had incurred suspicion, and who was turning from the window to enter an adjoining room.

"One moment before you go, Miss Varney," said Nick, politely detaining her. "There is one question I have neglected to ask, which I wish you would answer."

She paused and faced him, with a distrustful light in her cold gray eyes.

"What question?" she inquired.

"Is there a sleeping room directly over the library?"

"Yes."

"Who occupies it?"

"I do."

"Ah!"

Nick's quiet exclamation was rather expressive. It brought a quick frown to Clara Varney's face, a tinge of red to her cheeks. He read her correctly, that she was as proud and headstrong as her father, and she resented his intonation by coming back at him precisely as he expected.

"Why do you speak like that?" she asked. "Is there anything surprising in the fact that I occupy a room over the library?"

"No, Miss Varney, not in the mere fact."

"In what, then?"

"In that you were not disturbed by all that occurred directly under your bedroom," Nick suavely explained. "It seems almost improbable, really, that the safe could have been drilled and robbed without awaking you."

"Improbable, or not, Mr. Carter, it is a fact. Perhaps, knowing it to be a fact, you will think it less improbable."

Nick appeared oblivious to the girl's resentful frown and the icy tones in which she addressed him. He nodded and said indifferently:

"You may be right, Miss Varney. You heard nothing, then, during the night?"

"No, nothing."

"Do you usually sleep soundly?"

"Very soundly—and last night was no exception."

Miss Varney said the last with additional force, as if to impress it permanently on the mind of the detective, and then she turned quickly on her heel and left the room, as if she considered his questions entirely too personal.

Nick did not attempt to detain her, nor had he any inclination to do so. He turned and strode into the hall, meeting Mr. Varney at the base of the stairs. He stopped short, confronting him, and said, a bit curtly:

"Let's come to an understanding, Mr. Varney. Do you want me to investigate this case and sift it to the bottom?"

Mr. Varney looked surprised and annoyed.

"I certainly do, Mr. Carter, or I should not have sent for you," he replied. "Why do you question it?"

"Only because you have opposed me at times, and appear to resent my suspicions," said Nick. "Now, sir, I never brook opposition, nor permit any one to interfere with my work. I don't know who committed this robbery, nor whom an exposure may involve. I only know it's up to me to find out—if that is what you require."

"That is precisely what I require."

"Regardless of whom it involves?"

"It can involve only knaves and robbers," said Mr. Varney sternly. "Get them and their plunder—that's all I require of you."

"And all I require of you," Nick pointedly returned, "is that you shall leave the case entirely in my hands. Otherwise, up they go and I'll drop it."

"I will do so, Mr. Carter."

"Very well. You will hear from me later."

CHAPTER V.

A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

It was ten o'clock when Nick Carter, after a vain search for further evidence in the surrounding grounds and the narrow street back of the Varney residence, arrived home with his assistants and sat down to a late breakfast.

"It's a bad mess," he said grimly, expressing his opinion of the case for the first time. "It's the kind of a case I hate to tackle, and only my loyalty to the law constrains me to do so."

"Varney certainly is a hard man to deal with," said Chick. "He's as hard as flint."

"I care very little about that," Nick replied. "I am almost sure, however, that his daughter is seriously involved in the crime, and I am always averse to playing the bloodhound against a girl of her stamp. There must be some terrible occasion for it. Varney is very proud and rigidly honest, moreover, and it's not agreeable to bring home to a man of his upright character the sins of a daughter. Hang the case, anyway!"

"Why don't you chuck it, chief?" asked Patsy, gazing at the detective's frowning face.

"I never dodge my duty," Nick replied. "I'm going to the bottom of the case."

"It strikes me we haven't much to work from."

"There is some truth in that, Patsy," Chick agreed. "Our suspicions of Clara Varney will not help us much. She probably is prepared to maintain her position, unless we can dig out further evidence, and she's not a girl who can be intimidated."

"Gee! I should say not."

"What else have we?" Chick added. "Several footprints in a flower bed. The impression of a button in some cement. A few tools found on the library floor, and an electric drill invented by Andy Drake, the English cracksman. Very little, indeed, Nick, with which to run down the gang guilty of this job. It was the work of the cleverest kind of crooks, you'll admit, and I'm blessed if I can fathom how Clara Varney got in league with them, assuming that we are right."

"Her relations with them may not have been what you evidently suspect," Nick replied, "She may not have been their confederate. She may figure in the case in some other way. That really seems to be the more probable."

"I admit that."

"As for the evidence in our possession, it may cut more ice than you suppose," Nick added.

"How so?"

"We must find the man wearing a button with an

anchor on it. He probably is a sailor or a naval officer. By the size and type of the button, I should say it was on a seaman's reefer, the garment most likely to have been worn under the circumstances. I'll think of some way by which we can trace him, or discover his identity."

"You'll have a long search, then," said Chick, smiling incredulously. "There are thousands of reefers worn in this city."

"But only the wearer of this one was at the Varney residence last night," Nick dryly answered. "I shall find some way of tracking him."

"I'll gamble on that, chief," said Patsy.

"The most promising piece of evidence, however, is the electric drill," said Nick. "I think I can turn that to some advantage."

"How so?" Chick inquired.

"It seems quite remarkable that one of them has found its way to this country," Nick explained. "Drake was the inventor of it, and very probably the only maker of them. It is no common contrivance, and I doubt that one has ever been used over here before. It is safe to assume, at least, that Drake is the man who brought into this country the drill that was used last night," Nick pointed out. "He probably brought it when he crossed the ocean with Lord Amadon, when engaged in that abduction case, thinking he might subsequently use it for burglary over here."

"But he cannot have done this job," Chick said confidently. "We got him in the abduction case. He's in the State prison."

"True."

"How, then, can his invention be of any advantage to us, even if he did bring it over here?"

"We may find out where and with whom he left it."

"Find out from whom?" questioned Patsy.

"From Drake himself," said Nick. "He must have left it in care of somebody, presumably one of the old Garrick gang, by whom the burglary of last night may have been committed."

"Gee! that's right, too."

"Drake cannot, of course, know anything about the Varney burglary. He naturally supposes, assuming that I am right, that his invention is where he left it. Celeste Durelle, his former confederate, may have known where it was and very likely figures in this job. Be that as it may, if I can learn from Drake where he left the drill, I shall feel reasonably sure of striking the trail of the Varney burglars."

"But Drake will not put you wise, chief," Patsy objected. "He's dead nuts against you for having canned him. Even if he knows who had the drill, you couldn't get it out of him with a corkscrew."

"Very true—unless I can fool him."

"Can that be done?"

"I think so," said Nick. "I am going up to the prison and fix it up with the warden. I'll wear a disguise and pretend to be a new deputy. I can arrive there in time to get next to Drake's cell during the dinner hour. I'll tell him that I've been bribed by one of the old Garrick gang, who wants to know with whom he left the drill and how it can be obtained. I'll make him think there's a big burglary to be committed. I'll tell him that Celeste Durelle sent the crook to me and that efforts are being made to liberate him. I'll hand him a story that will blind him, all right, and evoke the information I want, providing he can impart it."

"Gee! that listens good to me," declared Patsy, with a nod of approval. "It ought to land the goods."

"I shall be absent only a few hours," Nick added, tossing aside his napkin. "There may be something doing when I return."

He left his residence five minutes later, and lost no time in carrying out his design along the lines he had mentioned.

The result was not what he expected. It was, in fact, the very last he would have anticipated.

The startling discovery made by the detective was apparent when, about one o'clock, Nick returned from a tier of cells in the State prison, and entering the office of the warden, amazed the latter by throwing off his disguise and saying bluntly, with a look of intense annoyance:

"Well, warden, you have been finely fooled."

"Fooled! What do you mean, Nick?"

"Andy Drake has given you the slip."

"Given me the slip?" cried the warden, starting to his feet. "Nonsense! Impossible!"

"Stop a moment," Nick interrupted. "Has Drake had any favors while here, or has he recently been in the prison hospital?"

"Favors—certainly not," said the warden. "He was, however, in the hospital about a month ago. But he could not have escaped from——"

"Not in the sense you mean, warden," Nick again interrupted. "But the rascal evidently contrived in some way to give your guards the slip and leave a substitute, so nearly resembling him that I was briefly deceived when I saw him in his cell just now. I know Drake perfectly well by sight, however, and the convict in the cell you designated is not Andy Drake. I'll swear to that."

"But looks like him?"

"Yes, very like him."

"It doesn't seem possible. He—wait a bit! We'll have him brought here."

The warden hastened to ring a bell and give a deputy the necessary instructions. Five minutes later, after Nick had removed the uniform he had worn for the subterfuge and resumed his own garments, the convict mysteriously occupying Andy Drake's cell was brought into the warden's office.

He was a well-built, rather thin-featured man, who, as Nick had said, bore a striking resemblance to the notorious English cracksman. A sly look in his eyes, a leer in the corners of his mouth, together with a general expression of sinister exultation—these plainly showed that he knew for what he was wanted, knew that the subterfuge in which he had figured with Andy Drake had finally been discovered.

He admitted it, in fact, after a grilling examination by the warden, but neither persuasion nor threats could induce him to tell where, when, or how the substitution had been accomplished; and the rascal was finally returned to his cell, grinning with open delight over the warden's bitter chagrin and perplexity.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MAN IN A REEFER.

It was late in the afternoon when Nick Carter arrived home, convinced that the Varney burglary was the work, not of an unknown gang, but of Andy Drake himself, with the help of crooks gathered around him since his extraordinary escape from prison.

The discovery shed new light on the crime. It caused Nick to wonder how Clara Varney had been led into relations with the notorious English cracksman. He felt sure it must have been accomplished through a third party, or that she had, very possibly, been lured blindly into the crime, only to find herself so desperately and dishonorably involved after its perpetration, that she did not dare confess the truth.

For Nick, while he could not ignore the evidence against her, found it hard to believe that any ordinary circumstances could have led such a girl into crime.

He was racking his brain for some theory consistent with all of the circumstances, when, entering his residence, he was met by his manservant, Joseph.

"You're just in time, Mr. Carter," said the other, the moment Nick opened the door. "Chick telephoned about five minutes ago."

"Telephoned from where?"

"From the morgue, sir. He wants you to come over there."

"What took him to the morgue?" asked Nick, wondering.

"He had a phone call about three o'clock from Captain Kane, of the precinct station, stating that the body of a murdered man had just been found back of an East Side lodging house, and asking you to come and have a look at the evidence. You were away, sir, so Chick went. He has rung up three times to find out whether you had returned."

Nick needed no more, in fact, to convince him that Chick had some serious motive in sending such a message. He departed immediately, therefore, and hastened over to the East Side.

It was nearly six o'clock when he entered the dismal little building in which, stretched in gruesome state on marble slabs, mute tokens of the tragic side of life, are displayed the unknown and unclaimed dead.

Nick found Chick, the precinct captain mentioned, two policemen, a physician, and a reporter engaged in an inspection of the corpse brought there only a short time before by the coroner's orders. The body, clad as when found, was lying on a bier in the outer room, nearly surrounded by the group of observers.

It was that of a remarkably handsome man of twenty-five, or thereabouts. His figure might, in life, have served a sculptor for a model. His wavy dark hair was matted with blood. His skull and face were badly battered. He appeared to have been the victim of a brutal, murderous assault.

Every eye except those of the physician, then making an examination of the body, was turned upon the famous detective.

"It's a case of murder, Carter," said the precinct captain. "The body was found about three o'clock in an area back of a cheap lodging house in Second Avenue. It was lying back of some refuse barrels, and escaped detection until two children happened to discover it. It must have been lying there since early this morning. Footprints and blood in a near alley told the story."

"What do you make of it, captain?"

"The man was lured into the alley and assaulted, either by thugs or by companions who had something to gain by it. They meant murder, all right, for there's a knife wound in his back, though these blows on the head would have been enough to finish him. The job was done late last night, or early this morning."

"Any clew to his assailants?"

"No. It looks like the work of a gang. This bracelet, set with diamonds, was found on the ground in the alley, where the body evidently was lying before the crooks took it into the back yard. I size it up that this fellow was one of the gang, that they had committed a robbery, and that the others killed this man in order to get his share of the plunder. There may have been a dispute over it, or something of the kind. They cleaned him up completely, at all events, leaving his pockets empty and nothing on his person to identify him."

"Not known in the lodging house, eh?" Nick tersely questioned.

"No. He's never been seen there, and it's not known where he lives. Fortunately, however, if this reporter has made no mistake——"

Captain Kane broke off abruptly, for the physician had straightened up and was turning to speak to him.

Nick examined the bracelet handed him, a costly gold jewel set with several diamonds. On the inner surface were engraved two initials: M. W.

Chick edged nearer to him and whispered:

"I have disclosed nothing. I thought you would show up even sooner."

"Have you seen these initials?"

"Yes."

"Are you wise?"

"Tell me."

"Varney's second wife was Marion Whitney."

"I didn't happen to know her name, but I suspected something of the kind."

"Why so?"

Both detectives were speaking in whispers too low to be heard by others.

Chick drew over the breast of the murdered man the coat which the physician had displaced.

It was a seaman's reefer, having a double row of black buttons—each embossed with an anchor.

"I found particles of cement on one of the lower buttons," Chick continued to whisper. "They since have been rubbed off, but they told the story."

"He was the man under the dining-room window."

"Sure thing."

"Where is Patsy?"

"Gone to the hospital. One of the surgeons sent word that Dawson is in shape to make a statement. I sent Patsy to take it."

"What do you think of Kane's theory?" questioned Nick.

"I think it hits the nail on the head," Chick said quietly. "How else can we size up the circumstances? This man evidently was one of the gang who did the job. Obviously, too, he's the one who was admitted to the house. He was a handsome fellow, as you can see, and he must in some way have got the best of Clara Varney and lured her into the crime. It's dollars to doughnuts that she cut the wire of the burglar alarm and let this fellow come in. He may have misled her. She may not have known that he was a crook, and perhaps was caught in a net from which she could not escape, and now does not dare to reveal."

"You may be right," Nick said simply.

"After getting away with their plunder, the gang evidently killed this man in order to get his share of the goods, as Kane has sized it up. The bracelet must have been dropped when they robbed him of the portion he

was carrying. Otherwise, how came it there, and why was the murder committed?"

Nick did not reply for a moment. The theory appeared to be a consistent one, really the only one that would dovetail with all of the circumstances. Presently, drawing Chick aside, he informed him of the discovery he had made, the escape of Andy Drake, and of his conviction that the latter had committed the burglary.

"If I am right," he added, "and this man was one of Drake's confederates, who the deuce is he? He doesn't look like a crook. His skin is tanned like that of a seaman. If that's his vocation, how came he to be in league with Drake? I begin to think there's another key to the mystery. There appears, moreover, to have been an attempt to prevent identification. He has been robbed of everything that might readily have revealed his identity, or so Kane has asserted, and if——"

"Stop a moment," Chick interrupted. "You are going too fast."

"Too fast?"

"The man has been identified—or we think he has."

"By whom?"

"A reporter, who asserts that the victim's name is Thomas Gaylord, that he is a lieutenant in the naval service and attached to a cruiser now in Newport harbor. A wire has been sent to the Newport naval station, asking for information about Gaylord. We are waiting for an answer."

"H'm, is that so?" Nick muttered thoughtfully. "Who is that reporter?"

Chick turned to look for him.

The reporter was standing near the physician, with a notebook and pencil in his hand, evidently making memoranda of what the physician was saying. He was a neatly clad, well-built man apparently in the thirties, with dark features, a Vandyke beard, and gold-bowed spectacles, a man of professional and intellectual appearance. At intervals he had been furtively watching the two detectives, as if covertly trying to determine what they were saying, though their subdued whispers could not be overheard.

He glanced up just as Chick turned, then beckoned to him, and he at once approached them, slipping his notebook and pencil into his pocket. Tendering a card to Nick, he bowed and said politely:

"Your face is familiar, Mr. Carter. Permit me—my card."

Nick read it, then thrust it into his pocket. It was engraved with a miniature heading of a New York newspaper, and in the lower left corner was inscribed the reporter's name:

Melvin T. Doty.

Nick measured the man with a glance.

"You have the advantage of me, Mr. Doty," said he. "Your face is not familiar."

The reporter smiled and shrugged his shoulders expressively.

"That is not strange, Mr. Carter," he replied, with affected modesty. "Melvin Doty is only an obscure reporter. You, on the contrary, are——"

"Pardon me," Nick interposed, a bit coldly. "I am told that you have identified this man, said to have been murdered."

"Yes, I am very sure of it," said Doty, bowing.

"Were you acquainted with him?"

"I was not. When in Newport, however, where I was connected with a local newspaper, I occasionally saw Gaylord at the naval station, or on the street. He was a very striking man, remarkably handsome, and one easily remembered. I am sure I'm not mistaken."

"I see," said Nick, still regarding him quite sharply. "It may be, then, that you——"

He was interrupted by the hurried entrance of a district telegraph boy, bringing the expected message from Newport.

Captain Kane, to whom it was addressed, signed for it and hastened to break the seal.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, glancing at it.

"What's the verdict?" questioned the physician.

The district captain read the communication aloud:

"Lieutenant Gaylord on leave of absence since Thursday. Supposed to be in New York. Address unknown."

Nick Carter glanced once more at the reporter, then quickly turned to Chick.

"I'm off for the Varney residence," he quickly whispered. "I think I now can force the sphinx to speak. Expect me home about eight. In the meantime——"

"Well?"

"Get information concerning this Mr. Doty. It may be more than a coincidence that the reporter assigned to write up this murder was—acquainted with Gaylord."

CHAPTER VII.

A KNAVE UNMASKED.

The reporter had turned from Captain Kane and the group conversing with him, and he suddenly discovered that Nick had departed, and that Chick also was making ready to leave. He crossed the room and joined him.

"Mr. Carter has gone, I see," he said, with inquiring intonation.

"Yes," said Chick. "He has another engagement."

"He was about to say something to me when the telegram arrived. I infer that it was of no importance."

"Presumably not," Chick allowed, as they passed out to the sidewalk.

"Are you going my way?"

"Well, that depends on which way you are going, Mr. Doty," said Chick, smiling.

Doty laughed a bit oddly and pointed to a taxicab at the curbing, some yards away.

"I have a conveyance," said he. "I will go your way, if you care to ride with me, and will drop you wherever you say."

"That's very kind, I'm sure."

"But I am not without an ax to grind," Doty smilingly added. "You see I confess it frankly."

They had paused at the door of the taxicab, which Doty had opened.

"Well, yes, I'll ride with you. I'm very pleased to accept, I'm sure," said Chick.

"Good enough. Get in."

"But don't go out of your own way, Mr. Doty," said Chick, as he took his seat. "Drop me anywhere in Madison Avenue."

"I'll do better, Mr. Carter," replied Doty, laughing. "I'll drop you at your own door, or even better—if you will accept."

"Accept what?"

"An invitation to dine with me," Doty said glibly, as the cab sped up Twenty-sixth Street. "I'm quartered in

Forty-seventh Street. You'll meet only a colored servant, who has dinner ready for serving at this hour. Five minutes will land us there. We then can comfortably discuss the matter about which I wish to ask you."

"Well, that's kind, I'm sure," said Chick, now fully determined to learn precisely what the man had up his sleeve. "It's past my own dinner hour."

"Capital! Let me decide it, then," cried Doty. "You shall dine with me."

Chick thanked him, accepted a cigarette, and then settled back in the corner to await developments.

"What is this matter which you wish to discuss with me?" Chick inquired.

"Not exactly discuss, Mr. Carter," corrected Doty, smiling. "I wish to get a little information. That is what reporters live on, you know. I should fare hard, however, if I had not a moderate income and a very generous aunt. The truth of the matter is, Carter, I have journalistic ambitions for which I am trying to lay a solid foundation. Unfortunately, however," Doty added, "I have not met with much success. I need a boost, so to speak, and now is the time when it can be done, and you are the man who can do it."

"How can I give you a boost?" asked Chick.

"I will explain," said Doty. "It doesn't relate entirely to—ah, but here we are. We will presently resume the subject."

He sprang out of the taxicab while speaking, adding quickly:

"Come in with me, Carter, and feel at home. I live here with a maiden aunt, who is a cripple and seldom comes down to her meals. I nearly always eat alone, therefore, with only Jason to talk to. He is my aunt's man of all work—ah, here he is. By his looks, for I see I'm half an hour late, we should find the soup cold. I will vouch for the roast, however, my dear Carter, so come in and feel at home. Listen! you can hear the thump of her crutch on the floor."

The house into which Chick was thus invited was an attractive brick dwelling, not in the least calculated to occasion suspicion. It had, in fact, all of the outward indications of eminent respectability.

A huge colored man, wearing a white cap and apron, had opened the door and taken the hats of both men, and then led the way toward an attractively furnished dining room, partly visible from the front hall.

From the floor above came the sound of a person walking with a crutch, and the piping voice of an elderly woman, at whose gray head Chick had a momentary glance, called over the baluster rail:

"If you intend going out again, Melvin, see me before leaving. I have an errand for you."

"All right, auntie," Doty cried, without pausing. "I'll run up to your room in half an hour."

Then, with a wink at Chick, he led the detective into the dining room, where the table was laid for two.

"Jason always placed a plate for her, though she rarely comes down," he explained, waving Chick to one of the chairs. "I'll ask you to fill her seat, my dear Carter, while I occupy my own. Now, Jason, when you are ready—you may begin firing."

Jason vanished through a butler's pantry and into the kitchen, presently returning with a first course of very excellent soup, which he placed before each, and then disappeared again.

"Now, Carter, we'll resume our talk," said Doty, while they began the meal. "I'm going to be perfectly frank with you. Here's the matter in a nutshell: I need a good story, straight from a reliable source, to lift me up a notch with my city editor. You are in a position to hand it to me. The question is: will you do it?"

"Why, I will gladly help you in any consistent way," Chick blandly assured him. "How can I do so?"

"By telling me precisely what you and Nick Carter think about two crimes now of public interest, and which you two detectives are investigating."

"We never publish our views in such cases," Chick explained. "It would be equivalent to revealing our suspicions, which might enable a criminal to escape."

"Discuss them informally with me, then, and I will publish no more than you sanction, and will not quote you," Doty suggested.

"To what crimes do you refer?"

"One, the murder of Gaylord," said Doty.

"But we have not investigated that crime, neither Nick nor I, and we cannot have any well-founded opinion," Chick evasively answered.

"How about the other, then?" questioned Doty. "I refer to that big burglary on Washington Heights."

"How did you learn that we are at work on it?"

"It is generally known. It is said, also, that Varney is out nearly half a million."

"His loss is great, I'll admit," said Chick tentatively.

"Is there any prospect of recovering the property?"

"None at present."

"Any clew to the burglars, or their identity?"

"None worthy of mention," Chick again evaded.

"You exclude, I suppose, that ingenious electric drill used by the rascals," said Doty, gazing a bit more sharply through his gold-bowed spectacles.

"How did you learn about the drill?" Chick asked, with brows knitting slightly.

"It is mentioned in one of the newspapers. I will have Jason bring a copy, if you wish to see it."

"No, indeed. It is not material."

"I might give you a tip, perhaps, in regard to the drill."

"You? How so? What do you know about it?"

"When I read about it," Doty explained, "I was reminded of a very similar burglary of which I read when living in London. A drill of precisely the same description was used at that time. It was invented, and the crime committed, by that notorious English cracksman, Andy Drake."

"Yes, I have heard of him," said Chick dryly. "I also know about the burglary you mention, and that he was the criminal."

"He's a wonderfully clever rascal."

"Not so clever, Doty, but that I landed him in Sing Sing several months ago."

"And he still is there?" questioned Doty.

"Where else could he be?"

"Where else?" Doty laughed and dropped a bit of cracker into his soup. "I cannot say. He was said to be, when I lived in London, the most elusive of knaves. He might have slipped out of prison, you know."

"Out of prison? I guess not!"

"But he's extraordinarily crafty, it's said, and a past master in the art of perfecting a disguise," said Doty, bending over his plate for another spoonful of soup. "Isn't it barely possible, Carter, the drill he invented

having been used in last night's burglary—isn't it barely possible that he was the very man who did the job? Though you think him in prison——"

Chick interrupted him with an amazing exclamation: "Excuse me, Doty, your beard is in your soup!"

As quick as a flash, though with a pretense of only polite attention, Chick reached over and grasped the tip of Doty's beard—just as the latter's head, then bowed over his plate, instinctively recoiled from the detective's outstretched hand.

Then off came beard, mustache, and spectacles, and a wig was jerked awry.

Mr. Melvin T. Doty had vanished.

Instead, confronting Chick, with eyes ablaze, sat—Andy Drake, the English cracksman.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MAN BEHIND THE GUN.

Chick Carter's lightninglike move by which he had exposed the notorious English crook was instantly followed by another—a reach for his revolver, but before he could draw it, no less than three weapons covered him.

One was in the hand of the huge negro, who came with a snarl through the pantry door. Two were in the hands of as many men, who, one from a near closet, the other from a corner of the hall, appeared like stage devils upon the scene. Both were low-browed, dark-featured fellows, and the first to cover Chick growled fiercely:

"Hold on! Don't pull a gun, Carter, or you'll get what's in this one."

"And this!" snapped the other.

Chick immediately exposed his empty hands and settled back in his chair, gazing at the sinister gang and the scowling face of the unmasked Englishman.

Andy Drake had swept aside his disguise, and, with both hands raised, was checking his sanguinary confederates.

"Easy, boys!" he commanded. "Don't shoot, Kenyon. One gun, Green, is enough. There's no need of making a porous plaster of him, even if he does show fight. Pocket yours, Jason, and remove these dishes. I'll wager that Carter now has lost his appetite. If not, he shall be fed with lead grapes. Keep him covered, Kenyon, while Jerry Green secures him to the chair. Look lively, Jerry."

"Oh, I'll agree to give you no great trouble—at present," Chick said dryly, meeting the threatening situation with perfect composure. "Really, Drake, this seems to be a decided roundabout turn of affairs."

The cracksman's face took on a look of malevolent exultation and sinister amusement. He hooked his thumbs through the armholes of his vest and retorted:

"Did you expect anything else?"

"Well, no, to tell the truth," said Chick boldly.

"That's not the truth. You didn't expect it."

"Yes, I did."

"When?" Drake demanded, with a sharper gleam in his eyes.

"When you began to talk of Andy Drake's escape from prison," said Chick. "As it happens, I knew you were out."

"You did, eh?" queried Drake incredulously. "When did you get wise to that?"

"To-day. The drill gave you away, and Nick has been looking you up. He has seen your substitute."

"He has, eh? Much good that will do him," Drake snarled. "We'll get him next, as we've got you."

"Possibly," Chick allowed indifferently.

"I got out chiefly to get you two screws who put me in there," Drake malevolently added. "I'm going to close your lamps, put both of you out of commission, and then hike back to England. I'll teach you infernal American detectives to put me behind bars."

"We need no teaching along those lines, Andy," Chick dryly put in.

"You'll find that I never forget—nor forgive."

"I'm not seeking forgiveness," Chick retorted. "You've played your game very neatly, Andy, and I'll give you credit for being a good bit over the average. But I was wise to your scheme even earlier than I have stated."

"You were, eh?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Tell me," said Drake, again a bit apprehensive.

"Do you really want to know?"

"If it's all the same to you."

"Sure thing," said Chick, as if the situation did not in the least annoy him. "I don't mind telling you."

"Out with it, then."

"You really brought me here, Andy, hoping to learn by a subterfuge what we made of that burglary and precisely what we suspect. That's a very old dodge on the part of crooks. We have been up against it so many times that we scent it from afar. I knew you were one of the gang the moment you began to question me so closely about the robbery."

"Well, you're not so far-sighted," the cracksman said, with a sneer. "I expected that you would tumble to it."

"You did, eh?"

"And that's why I did not mention it until I had you well in here, where we could hold you up at any moment," Drake pointedly added. "You didn't get me early enough, Carter, to prevent my getting you at the finish. Make sure of those knots, Jerry."

"Punk! I'm no novice," growled the ruffian addressed, who then was binding Chick to his chair. "He'll slip no knot of mine."

"You appear to be an expert, Mr. Green," drawled Chick, as cool as if seated at his own office table. "I wonder where you acquired such skill."

"That's your privilege. Take it out in wondering."

"Thanks. It's not worth while."

"That's good enough, Jerry," Drake interposed. "Now close the shutters and the hall door, Kenyon, and switch on the light. We'll have a talk with this fellow under true colors and find out where we are at. Tell Tobey he now may shake that crow's make-up and come down here. Tobey is another of my constituents, Carter; he's the one you heard walking with a crutch."

"Ah, I see," Chick replied. "You made very sure to blind me in order to get me."

"You bet we did," Drake forcibly declared.

"Well, I'm very glad to be here," said Chick complacently. "I just dote on getting close to such a bunch of rascals. What comes next on the program you have so carefully prepared?"

"You'll be given a chance to reveal what you and Nick Carter think about the burglary and the killing of——"

"Oh, you'll have to cut that out," Chick int[illegible]

"The star artist in the revelation line has lost his voice and must be wiped off the list."

"Is that so?"

"Irrevocably."

"We'll wipe you off the earth, Carter, in that case," Andy Drake darkly declared. "But I first will tell you something about the burglary, and about that fellow found dead this afternoon."

"Don't go to too much trouble, Andy, for I shall not believe anything you tell me. Besides, Nick will gather in all the information that is necessary—and then gather you in!" Chick added pointedly.

"Don't bank on that, Carter," sneered Drake, contemptuously. "We are prepared to head off any move that Nick Carter may attempt."

"Better men than you have thought the same."

"Time will tell. Come in, Tobey, and have a look at him," Drake added, turning to the door. "You, Jason, set something to drink on the table. We will then determine how best to dispose of this infernal screw."

A fourth man had entered the room, a thin-featured, sinister fellow, who gazed at Chick with a leer and drawled:

"I've had a look at him times enough, Andy. I know him."

"Yes, and I know you, Mark Tobey," said Chick, a bit sternly. "I've got you marked, too, from this hour."

"Mark it on ice, then it'll melt off and not worry you," growled Tobey, with an indifferent sneer. "No fly cop scares me—you can gamble on that."

Jason brought in a bottle and some glasses, which he placed on the table, then remained in the room.

Chick glanced from one to another of the five men, and Andy Drake, observing him, laughed malevolently and said:

"Got it on you, haven't we?"

"Well, somewhat," Chick allowed.

"We're the gang that did the job and got away with the plunder."

"No need to tell me that."

"Have a good look at us. You may need to remember us."

"Oh, never fear," said Chick impressively. "I'll not forget you, not a man of you."

Bent upon gaining time, Chick asked, with apparent interest:

"Whose house is this, Drake? How did you happen to land in such excellent quarters?"

Drake laughed, with his knavish pride a little stirred.

"It's easy to rent such places in this city, Carter."

"Say!" Tobey butted in, with a snarl. "Can't you see, Andy, that he is only stringing you? He's got something up his sleeve. He is trying to prolong this game of talk, that's what he's doing. Since he's trying to gain time, therefore, there must be something doing that we don't know about."

"You're a wise guy, Tobey," said Chick, with an ominous gleam in his eyes. It's a wonder to me that you're not in Congress."

The face of the English cracksman had turned dark and threatening again. He seemed to realize that his confederate might be right. He poured a drink, swallowed it with a single gulp, and then said sharply:

"You think that's what he's doing, eh?"

"That's just what I think."

"We'll soon find out whether it is, or not. Bring that reel of clothesline from the kitchen, Jason, and look sharp about it."

Jason hastened out to obey.

"H'm, it looks as if I were booked for trouble," thought Chick. "I wonder what he has in mind."

He sat bound fast to his chair, with the cruel cords eating deep into his wrists, but his face was never more calm and cold, his nerves never more firm and steady.

Andy Drake beckoned his confederates nearer, and they gathered close around him. For some time, it seemed a long time to Chick, they talked in whispers, too low for him to hear, all the while with darker looks and more threatening faces. In the meantime, Jason returned with a reel of rope, and Drake finally looked up and cried:

"Reel off about twenty feet of that line. I'll soon have——"

He was interrupted by the ringing of a bell. He listened intently till it stopped, then quickly cried:

"The signal ring! That must be Celeste. What sent her here? Go and admit her, Jason—after making sure!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE EAVESDROPPER.

It was seven o'clock in the evening when Nick Carter arrived at Washington Heights on his way to the Varney residence. He did not approach it from in front, but through the narrow, sparsely settled street running back of the estate.

Darkness had settled over the landscape and river. Scattered lights gleamed through the trees. A bright glow like that of noonday marked the course of the front avenue.

The grounds surrounding the palatial residence, overhung with numerous trees, were darker because of the contrast. No stars were visible. The heavens were hung with clouds—as grim and gloomy as those overhanging the house itself.

There was a look of stern determination on the face of the detective. He vaulted the picket fence, stole back of the garage, and then cautiously approached that part of the house in which the side hall, the dining room, and a smaller living room were located.

"A light in the sitting room and the front chamber," he muttered, pausing briefly. "Varney may be there, as well as his wife. I may catch the girl alone more easily than I thought. The nursery in darkness, also the room of the governess. The children must be abed, and—h'm, she may be out, or in that lower lighted room."

Nick chiefly scrutinized the windows of the chambers then in darkness; the others spoke for themselves.

The eyes of a lynx, however, could not have detected it—the head cautiously raised above the sill of one of the gloomy windows, a head half hid by the lace draperies, the head of a woman crouching on the floor in the darkness. She had been there for half an hour, constantly watching the dimly lighted grounds and each way of approach from the back street.

She drew away with eyes gleaming when she saw him, and watched him until his imposing figure disappeared under the porte-cochère.

Nick stole by the side door and crept to the lighted window of the sitting room, where, peering under the partly lowered roller shade, he discovered her.

Clara Varney, alone in the room, was seated near the table, searching, with frowning eyes, the columns of an

evening newspaper. Her face was pale, her lips gray and drawn.

"Looking for something," thought Nick, briefly watching her. "She's reading what has been published about the burglary. The killing of Gaylord cannot be reported in that edition. I'll report it, instead."

The last passed a bit grimly through his mind. He glanced around, bent upon making sure he was not observed, and then he tapped gently on the window with the tip of his finger.

Clara Varney started, listened for a moment, then located the sound. Her face lighted quickly. She arose and darted to the hall door, closing it, then hastened to the window. Her looks and eagerness were significant.

"She thinks I'm Gaylord," Nick rightly inferred. "I have the game cornered, at least."

The girl drew back, ghastly again, when she raised the curtain and saw the detective's face in the light shed through the glass.

Nick quickly shook his head, touched his lips with his finger, and then pointed to the side door.

Clara Varney hesitated. She seemed to steady herself with an effort, grasping his meaning, and then she nodded and hastened from the room.

Nick saw her pause and listen for a moment in the side hall. Then he stepped to the door, just as she opened it.

"I must see you alone, Miss Varney," he whispered.

"For what?" she questioned, with voice lowered.

"Keep quiet and let me come in," said Nick. "It is of vast importance to all concerned. Don't make a mistake by refusing."

"I will hear what you have to say."

She drew back for him to enter, then noiselessly closed the door and led him to the room from which she had come, resuming her seat near the table.

Nick shut the door quietly and sat down.

A crouching figure, moving with the stealth of a leopard, came to the head of the side stairs—Theresa Dale.

She listened for a moment and found that she was unable to hear through the closed door below. She crept down the stairs cautiously, holding her breath, pausing at times to listen, until she stood in the dim light of the lower hall.

"Now, Mr. Carter, what's the meaning of this?"

It was the question with which Clara Varney began the interview that gave Nick Carter the key to the mystery.

Nick did not answer it. Instead, he inquired gravely:

"Where is your father?"

"With my stepmother, in her chamber."

"Is either likely to come down here?"

"No. We never spend an evening together."

"Is there an estrangement?"

"Yes. My father and I are very seriously estranged," Miss Varney admitted. "It is, of course, not generally known. I mention it to you only in explanation of my coldness and reticence this morning, which I saw that you observed. Why have you come here?"

Nick pitied the girl. Her face wore an expression that would have stirred pity in any man. He felt sorry for her, but duty left him only one course.

"I will presently inform you," he replied. "I wish you would feel, Miss Varney, that I am inclined to be your friend, one who would do you a service, if possible; not that I am merely a cold and relentless agent of the law. A serious crime has been committed, you know, and your father has suffered a great loss."

Miss Varney heard him without a change of countenance.

"The loss will not cripple him," she said coldly. "I, too, have suffered a loss. His troubles are not greater than my own."

"Your own?"

"Yes."

"I wish you to explain that and tell me the whole truth," said Nick. "You were averse to doing so this morning. I now must insist upon it, however, and you really have no alternative."

"No alternative?" Miss Varney's brows fell ominously.

"Absolutely none."

"Why do you say that? What do you mean by it?"

"I mean precisely what I say, Miss Varney," Nick replied. "I would much rather that you would tell me, however, than force me to tell you."

"Tell you what?"

"The whole truth."

"About what?"

"The burglary."

"But I know nothing whatever about it."

"That will not do, Miss Varney," Nick said, more sternly. "I know that you are concealing something. I know that you did not tell me the truth this morning. You are not doing so now, when only the truth can serve you—yes, and possibly save you."

"Save me?" Clara echoed, white and staring. "What do you mean by that? From what am I to be saved?"

"From exposure, perhaps—an exposure of your complicity in this crime."

Miss Varney drew up haughtily, frowning darkly.

"Mr. Carter, you evidently are laboring under a great mistake," she said coldly. "My complicity in this crime? Why, sir, that is absurd. I know absolutely nothing about the burglary."

"And you have told me only the truth?" Nick sternly questioned.

"I shall change nothing that I have told you, Mr. Carter."

"I shall, then, compel you to change all that you have told me," said Nick. "I know, Miss Varney, that you did not sleep soundly all of last night, as you asserted this morning. I know that you were out of your room during the night."

"Indeed?"

"And out of the house."

"Well?"

"I know, too, that you cut the wire of the burglar alarm."

"You appear very sure of it, sir."

"You cut it, Miss Varney, in order to admit the burglars," Nick continued to sternly accuse her. "One of them was a man lured into this crime by others, and who also lured you into it. Do you deny any of these charges?"

"Not at present," said Clara icily. "I prefer to hear all you have to say."

"I have evidence in proof of what I assert," Nick replied.

"Indeed?"

"You shall judge for yourself."

"If you please." Miss Varney spoke with a sneer.

"After the burglary," Nick sternly proceeded, "the

crooks fled over to the East Side with their plunder. One piece of it was found in an alley adjoining a cheap lodging house. It is a bracelet set with diamonds, engraved on the inner surface with the initials of your stepmother's maiden name, Marion Whitney."

"Such a jewel was stolen."

"The alley in which it was found, Miss Varney, leads into a refuse-filled area back of the lodging house," Nick proceeded. "One of the burglars was found there this afternoon."

"You have arrested one of them, then?"

"No. There was no occasion to arrest him. He is dead."

"Dead?"

"Murdered by his confederates, in order to secure his share of their booty."

"Horrible!"

"Horrible, indeed!" Nick agreed, with his stern gaze fixed on the face of the frowning girl. "The murdered man, Miss Varney, was the one to whom I have referred—the man who lured you into the crime, or the utterly inconsistent attitude you have taken. His body has been identified. It is that of Lieutenant Thomas Gaylord, of the naval service."

Nick Carter was not much startled by the effect of his disclosure, partly because, as he had remarked to Chick, he had begun to suspect that there was another key to the mystery.

Clara Varney's icy composure, her haughty reserve, the covert contempt with which she had been listening, at times curtly responding—all vanished like a flash when she heard the name of the murdered man.

Something like a half-choked cry broke from her. A wild, indescribable expression leaped up in her eyes. She turned as ghastly pale as if struck with death, and, with both hands crushed to her breast, she stared at Nick and gasped, like one unable to believe:

"Gaylord—Lieutenant Gaylord—dead!"

"Yes. Murdered by——"

She interrupted Nick with the groan of one suddenly and utterly heartbroken. Without another word, covering her ghastly face with her hands, she half sank from her chair, swaying as if on the verge of fainting.

Nick Carter guessed the truth.

"It's the other key!" flashed through his mind.

The figure in the dimly lighted hall was crouching close against the wall, scarce three feet from the closed door, the figure of a woman shivering from head to foot, with face as white as that of the girl swaying to and fro in her chair.

CHAPTER X.

THE SPHINX SPEAKS.

Nick Carter sat in silence for several moments. He did not touch nor attempt to compose his companion. He knew that he was dealing with a girl whose strength of nerve and power of will were superior to any circumstances that might confront her, once they had regained their sway. He waited until she drew up a little in her chair, and he then said gravely:

"You now have something to tell me, Miss Varney."

His prediction was correct—he had forced the sphinx to speak.

Miss Varney lowered her hands and looked at him. Her eyes, abnormally bright, glittering as if with fever, were tearless. Her drawn features were deathly pale.

"Yes," she said hoarsely. "I must tell you, now, that he may be—may be set right."

"Try to be calm, Miss Varney, and——"

"I am calm," she interrupted. "I never was more calm. Utter despair, coupled with abject humiliation, can have no expression. I shall be calm until—until I am alone."

"Tell me as briefly as possible," said Nick kindly.

"I tell you again—you were mistaken."

"Hardly that. I but took the surest way to evoke the truth. What do you know about Lieutenant Gaylord?"

"All about him."

"Tell me, then, and explain your conduct."

"An explanation now is imperative," said Clara, still with that dreadful look on her hueless face. "Lieutenant Gaylord has loved me for a long time. I loved him and promised to marry him. That was the cause of my estrangement from my father. He opposed the match. He excluded Lieutenant Gaylord from this house. He forbade my retaining his acquaintance, even, and threatened to disinherit and drive me from home unless I submitted to his arbitrary will. I have only pretended to comply with my father's wishes."

"Secretly maintaining your relations with Gaylord?"

"Yes. Barring the secrecy harsh parental dictates made imperative, they have been strictly honorable relations."

The girl's gray lips quivered for an instant, but there was no sign of a tear in her glittering eyes.

"Lieutenant Gaylord was to have gone on a year's cruise with his ship the coming week," she continued. "His despair was great and I loved him. I consented to secretly marry him before he sailed—I was willing to do so.

"We decided not to risk being seen by daylight, and resolved to go by night and in an automobile to a small Connecticut town, where he had made arrangements for a marriage as soon as possible after midnight. My father watches me closely, and it depended upon what hour I could safely steal from the house. Lieutenant Gaylord had obtained leave of absence for four days, and last night was the one agreed upon."

"When and where were your plans laid?"

"I had a secret conference with him under the porte-cochère three nights ago."

"H'm, I see," Nick murmured. "Were your plans carried out?"

"Not as laid," was the reply. "At twelve o'clock last night Lieutenant Gaylord tapped on the dining-room window to let me know he was waiting. I had disconnected the burglar alarm, not cut the wire, and I was in the side hall. I at once stole out and joined him under the porte-cochère."

"Not at the dining-room window?"

"I did not go near the dining-room window."

"Continue."

Nick's face reflected none of his thoughts, but he was now shooting straight at the mark.

Theresa Dale no longer was crouching in the hall.

Miss Varney continued:

"We stole away to an automobile waiting in a neighboring street. The chauffeur knew neither of us by sight. He took us to our destination, some thirty miles east, but we failed to accomplish our mission. The clergyman

who had promised to marry us had been taken fatally ill. We tried in vain to find another, or a justice who would perform the ceremony, but unfortunately we were forced to return without having accomplished our object, though resolved only to defer it for a day or two—a day that now can never come."

Though the voice of the girl sounded strangely cold, there was a grief in it that Nick Carter, at least, could keenly appreciate. Nevertheless, under the tragic circumstances, he felt that the miscarriage of her plans was not entirely unfortunate.

She appeared to feel that she had told him all there was to tell, and, indeed, it was all he really needed to know. Gazing at her drawn, white face and tearless eyes, he said gravely:

"You have confided a secret to me, Miss Varney, that I shall never reveal without your permission."

The girl's lips trembled again and she made no reply."

"The interests of justice, however, must not be perverted," Nick added. "You must answer a few questions for me."

"I will answer them."

Nick's mind swept in quick review over the entire case. He drew forward in his chair and asked a question to which Varney himself had made a negative answer.

"Is the combination of the library safe in writing anywhere in the house?"

"Yes," replied Clara.

"Where?"

"I have a memorandum of it in lead pencil on the bottom of a drawer in my desk. The desk is in my room."

"That helps—if help now is needed," said Nick. "You did not, you say, cut the burglar alarm."

"I did not. I disconnected it."

"Did you reconnect it when you returned?"

"I did."

"Do you know who cut the wire?"

"I do not."

"At what hour did you return?"

'It was after three o'clock in the morning."

"Did you enter the side door?"

"Yes. I saw nobody, nor heard anything. I stole up to my room and went to bed."

"Did you wear rubbers while you were out?"

"I did not. There was no occasion."

"Have you a pair in your room?"

"Yes."

"Did you wear them at all yesterday?"

"No."

"It appears, then, that——"

Nick paused abruptly, listening, and held up his finger. His quick ears heard what those of the girl failed to detect.

Presently, with brows knitting closer, he leaned forward in his chair and whispered:

"Who has the room over this?"

"The governess—Theresa Dale."

Nick seized his hat, then laid his hand on the girl's arm.

"Miss Varney," he said impressively, "it's up to you to keep your secret, if you don't want it disclosed. I'm going, now. For several minutes, however, I wish you to keep on talking precisely as if I sat here listening to you. Do you understand?"

"Yes."

"Believe me, I leave you—my sympathy."

Nick slipped into the hall and closed the door, then listened again. He could hear only the voice of the girl he had just left.

Noiselessly out of the side door, stealing through the porte-cochère, then close under the wall of the house, thence back of some shrubbery and through the gloom under the trees—thus he reached the sheltering wall of the garage, from which he could watch both the rear and side doors of the house.

He scarce had arrived at this vantage point when, through the surrounding darkness, came a whispered exclamation:

"Holy smoke! You here, chief?"

Nick turned and found at his elbow—Patsy Garvan.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW NICK SIZED IT UP.

"Hello!" Nick quietly muttered, when he recognized his assistant. "What brought you here, Patsy?"

"I've been to the hospital to hear Dawson's story," Patsy whispered.

"Chick told me."

"I heard enough to send me here. I wanted a look at the governess, when she's not made up."

"So you've got wise, also, eh?" Nick murmured, smiling.

"I reckon so."

"Keep an eye on the porte-cochère while I watch the back door," added the detective. "Unless I am much mistaken, you'll very soon see her. I heard her making hasty preparations to leave."

"That so?"

"What did Dawson tell you?"

"Just enough to set me on the right track," said Patsy. "He was positive that he left the burglar alarm all right and in working order. He was awakened about two o'clock in the morning by a faint sound in the hall, and he thought there was a cat in the house."

"Humph! So there was—a two-legged one."

"Right you are, chief," said Patsy, chuckling softly.

"Go on."

"He slipped on some clothing and went into the rear hall," Patsy continued. "As he did so a ray of light flashed in his face. He caught sight of what he supposed was a small-sized man, and he grappled with him—only to find it was a woman in male attire."

"Precisely as I have suspected."

"Before he could utter a sound, however, Dawson was knocked out by——"

"By one of Theresa Dale's confederates," Nick quietly put in. "The governess is the blackbird we want, Patsy, along with the rest of the flock. I've got the whole case down pat. She has been spying to-night, too, and heard enough to cause her to bolt."

"The governess?"

"Yes."

"But what about the Varney girl?"

Nick told him in a very few moments enough to make the case perfectly plain.

"Gee! but that's tough for her," whispered Patsy. "I wouldn't have dreamed of that."

"Who sows the wind shall reap the whirlwind," Nick replied.

"That's right, too, chief, as far as that goes."

"I'm sorry for her and sorry for Varney—that he is such a proud and arbitrary old fool," Nick added. "Ah, well, that's their business. It's enough for us to look after the crime and the criminals."

"But why did they kill Gaylord?" Patsy questioned, still a bit perplexed. "I don't quite fathom that."

"Rats!" Nick muttered. "Drake is the big finger, and Theresa Dale is none other than Celeste Durelle, his former pal, made up as dark as a Creole. I should never have known her."

"But the murder of Gaylord?"

"Celeste Durelle overheard him and Clara Varney three nights ago planning their midnight marriage," Nick explained. "They knew the couple would be absent several hours, at least, and a burglary already having been planned, the rascals resolved to pull it off on the same night, scheming to fix the burglary on Gaylord and Clara Varney."

"Gee! I see the point, now."

"After the job, some of them trailed Gaylord, who must have seen Clara home, over to the East Side and gave him his quietus. They then hid the body and left a piece of the stolen jewelry near by, to show that he had had a hand in the burglary. They reasoned that the girl never would tell the truth."

"They had it about right, too."

"In order to make it doubly sure, Celeste left footprints of Clara's rubbers under the dining-room window, as if the Varney girl had been out there with Gaylord," Nick added. "She knew, the jade, that we would discover both her prints and his."

"Sure thing. But how did they contrive to open Varney's safe?"

"Celeste got the combination from a drawer in Clara Varney's desk—the greater fool she for having it there."

"But why did the governess hold Chick up with a gun, when she caught him in Miss Varney's sleeping room?" asked Patsy, quick to recall all of the mystifying points.

"More craft," said Nick tersely. "She reasoned that it would indicate her loyalty to the Varney family and divert suspicion from her, if any existed. That's all there was to that move."

"Gee! I guess you're right, chief."

"She'll bolt from here and join the gang," said Nick confidently. "It will be child's play for us to shadow her and corner the whole outfit."

"That's right, too," chuckled Patsy. "Bully for you, chief."

"In this case, at least, I feel that I must agree with you," Nick said modestly. "It's not yet twenty-four hours since the burglary was committed. That's brief time in which to turn a trick of this kind."

"Holy smoke! I should say so."

"Really, I think it may be truthfully called a record round-up," smiled Nick. "This is, of course, providing we succeed in bagging our game, and—easy! there she comes."

A dark figure, hardly discernible in the gloom, had appeared near the steps of the back door of the house. It appeared to be that of a small, slender man, clad in a black suit and with a cap drawn over his brow.

"Humph!" Nick quietly ejaculated. "In male attire again, eh? She's our quarry, Patsy, all right."

Celeste stood listening, gazing in each direction.

Presently, stealing away near the wall of the house, she reached the corner of it. There she again waited, glancing in every direction, and then she darted quickly across the lawn and through a gate leading into the back street.

"After her, Patsy," Nick whispered. "I'll cross the grounds in this direction and overtake you later."

"Trust me, chief! She'll not give me the slip."

Ten minutes later the two detectives, both in disguise, were seated in a south-bound subway train, ten feet back of the figure in black—Celeste Durelle.

CHAPTER XII.

IN RECORD TIME.

As Nick Carter had predicted, it was child's play for him and Patsy to shadow Celeste Durelle to her destination. That also proved to be, as Nick had foreseen, the house into which Chick Carter had been invited less than an hour before.

Celeste darted up the steps and prodded the electric push button twice, then once, then twice again.

The summons, a signal ring, brought Jason to the door, and Celeste hastened into the darkness of the hall—and to her fate.

Watching her from the opposite side of the street, Nick said quietly:

"Get to the rear of the house, through the adjoining one, Patsy. Hold up any one who attempts to get out that way."

"Trust me for that," Patsy muttered.

"I will have a couple of policemen with you in five minutes, and as many more at my elbow. We'll raid the house from in front and take the chances."

"Gee! It strikes me, chief, that there are none to take."

"None worth mentioning," Nick agreed, and Patsy sped across the street.

Andy Drake was right in his prediction: that the new arrival was Celeste Durelle.

Chick Carter viewed her with momentary surprise when she hastened into the room in which the gang were seated, with their vicious designs upon him briefly diverted.

"Great guns!" he said to himself. "Celeste Durelle, indeed, and that governess at Varney's. In male attire—by Jove, I see it all, now. No wonder I didn't recognize the jade when she held me up. She looks little enough like the yellow-haired adventuress who woolly-eyed Inspector Denny. She's as clever as this rascally running mate of hers, Andy Drake himself."

Celeste and the others had not been silent while this passed through Chick's mind. Observing him when she entered, Celeste pulled off her cap and cried, in manifest nervousness and excitement:

"Oh, you've got him, Andy, have you? You're lucky to that extent at least, and you'd better string him up without delay. He's one of the worst ever! We're up against it, I'll have you know."

"Up against it!" Drake echoed, with countenance quickly changing. "What do you mean by that? Why are you here, Celeste, and in that rig?"

The faces of Jason, Green, Kenyon, and Tobey reflected their rising apprehensions.

Celeste laughed nervously and gave her head a defiant toss.

"I've bolted for good," she cried. "It's the Canada

line for mine, as quick as I can cross it, and then the blue and briny by the first steamer. Nick Carter is wise to the whole business."

"Wise to it?" questioned Drake, with eyes beginning to blaze.

"The devil you say!" gasped Tobey.

"Good for Nick!" thought Chick, the most interested witness of the scene. "He's got in his work, all right, as he predicted."

"What do you mean?" Andy Drake repeated. "Explain."

"Oh, the explanation is quickly made," said Celeste. "Nick Carter came out to the crib an hour ago and caught the Varney girl alone. I heard most that he said to her—enough to cause me to bolt. He had her cornered, all right, and she wilted like a rag."

"He has discovered the truth?" questioned Drake, as black as a thundercloud.

"You bet he has, Andy, from A to Z."

"Perdition! Is that so?"

"He's the king-pin of them all, that fellow," Celeste declared, with a series of emphatic nods. "I listened until I could take chances no longer, and I slipped up to my room and into these togs. I feared that outside he might have a spy, who would arrest a woman leaving the house. But I got away clean in this rig."

"Before Carter left the house?"

"Sure thing."

"How sure are you?" asked Tobey apprehensively.

"As sure as I'm standing here," cried Celeste confidently. "You can bet I'm sure of that. I heard the Varney girl talking to him just as I sneaked out of the house."

"Well, that helps," Tobey muttered. "What's to be done? He's not wise to this crib, is he?"

"No, no, of course not," Drake interrupted. "That's impossible."

"I know what's to be done, Andy, as far as I am concerned," Celeste declared.

"What's that?" frowned Drake, sharply eying her.

"I'm going to bolt, just as I've stated, and lose no time about it. It's good old England for mine, if I can get there, where I know all the safe haunts, and where sleuths like Nick Carter are only read about. No more New York for mine."

"Getting frightened, are you?" sneered Drake.

"I know my business," Celeste retorted. "You've got the stuff here, Andy. Dish out my share of it, then, and I'll nail the first train north. I can get away in these togs. You fellows may do what you like."

"You're in a devil of a hurry, Celeste, it strikes me," Drake remonstrated. "Suppose I refuse?"

"Refuse—you'll not do that," snapped Celeste, with eyes flashing. "That would be the worst move you could make. Besides, I know you, Andy. You'll not do that."

"No, no, the girl's right," said Tobey, putting in his oar again. "She has played her part, and played it well, and it's up to us to make good. Besides, Andy, things don't look as bright as they did."

"I admit that," Drake growled thoughtfully.

"Her scheme is good enough for me," Tobey added. "It's not safe to remain, here, and we can make a getaway singly better than in a bunch."

"You mean?"

"I mean that we'd better whack up the plunder, share and share alike, and then each for himself, and the devil take the hindermost."

"That's my idea," put in Jerry Green.

"And mine," added Kenyon, while the huge negro nodded his approval.

"Before we have finished this infernal screw?" Drake demanded, with a malevolent glance at Chick.

"His finish might bring about our own," Tobey objected, shaking his head. "I'm not for running my precious neck into a noose. It would be all right, Andy, if that were the only resort. Since we are going to bolt, however, we'd better leave him with his lamps lit."

"That's right, too," said Kenyon. "No electric chair for mine, Andy."

Mutterings of approval came from the others.

Chick Carter gazed and listened as if he were the least interested person in the room.

Drake looked moodily from one to the other. He did not speak for several moments, and then he said abruptly:

"So be it, then. The majority rules."

"That's as it should be," said Celeste."

"Great guns!" thought Chick. "Is there no way to prevent them?"

"Bring out the stuff, Jason," Drake commanded, drawing up in his chair. "Bring it out and place it on the table. We'll divide it and be off—since that's the will of all."

Jason hastened into the pantry, and Chick presently heard him opening several heavy drawers. The huge negro returned in a very few moments, with both arms filled with packages, which he dumped upon the table as if they had no intrinsic value.

There were numerous batches of bonds, and bundles of stock securities, tied in parcels with tape—aggregating a vast fortune in value.

There were a score of jewel cases, too, some of which the rascals hastened to open—and diamonds, rubies, and sapphires flashed with a myriad of scintillating rays in the lamplight.

Chick Carter writhed and ground his teeth, seeing no way by which to prevent these rascals from dividing their booty and seeking safety in flight.

Andy Drake heard the gritting of his teeth and understood it. He swung round with a harsh, malevolent laugh, and cried:

"It hurts, don't it, Carter, to see all this slipping away? Have a good look at it. It's the last you'll ever have. I'm off for home with my share, and I'll have at least the satisfaction of having bested you American detectives and showed you the make-up of an English cracksman. We'll be off within an hour, and——"

He got no further.

A board in the floor of the hall creaked loudly.

Mark Tobey swung round to open the door—but it was opened from without.

A roar came from five men, turned white with dismay, and a shriek from a staggering woman.

Nick Carter and half a dozen policemen were pouring into the room.

Only one of the gang attempted to escape—the cracksman himself. Drake leaped up and darted like a flash through the pantry—only to be dropped with a bullet by Patsy Garvan, when he arrived at the kitchen door.

There is but little to add, for the raid was a complete

success, and within five minutes all six of the gang were in irons. They met their just deserts, later, and Andy Drake, his wound not proving fatal, was returned to Sing Sing as Nick had predicted.

Though the Varneys were truly grateful for the services rendered by Nick and his assistants, whom they very generously rewarded for their work, there were features of the case which Nick did not like to remember. Nevertheless, Clara Varney was married a year later to a hospital surgeon.

"It's the way of the world," Nick Carter observed, a bit grimly, when he heard of it. "The case was a record breaker in more than one respect. Within twenty-four hours we had the criminals in custody and their plunder in our possession. That, Chick, ought to be good enough for us, even."

THE END.

"Nick Carter's Still Hunt; or, A Chase After Stolen Bonds," is the title of the story that will be found in the next issue of this weekly, No. 28, which will be out March 22d. You will read in this story how the great detective unearths a million-dollar robbery, and what follows Ida's dangerous errand to the crook's retreat, and also of the gas trap that is laid for Nick and his woman assistant.

A DOUBLE PLAY;

Or, TWO MYSTERIES IN ONE NET.

By ALDEN F. BRADSHAW.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

The safe in the jewelry store of Kennedy & Hicks, in Tremont Street, Boston, is blown open, and $20,000 worth of jewelry is taken from it. Chief Inspector Watts and Detective Keene discover that the burglars entered the cellar of the building in which the jewelry store was located through the cellar of the adjoining building, and that one of them was a woman. Though they carry on their investigation for two weeks, no trace of the burglars can be found.

Declaring that she loves her husband dearly, but that she feels it her duty to find out how he spends his nights, Mrs. Philip Payson asks Keene to help her in the matter. This Keene agrees to do, and he calls at the office of Payson, who poses as an advertising agent. Payson is out, but Keene searches the office and finds that it is used only as a blind and a place for Payson to put on a disguise. Keene also finds a note in Payson's desk directed to "Mr. L. Page," and signed Darby McGee, in which the writer threatens to "blow the whole game to the police," unless he is "let into the game."

CHAPTER V.

A DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE.

In the light of the evidence discovered, Keene drew the quite natural conclusion that he had run upon a well-organized gang of thieves and burglars, the head and front of which was probably the man who was playing a double game, as a legitimate advertising solicitor and the director of a gang of designing burglars.

The letter found in Payson's desk indicated that one of these, by the name of McGee, evidently had incurred general displeasure, and was threatened with being excluded from this organization of malefactors. Its date, the hour it must have been received by Page, which appeared to be an alias concealing Payson's true identity from his confederates, and its threatening contents, and the appointment made for two o'clock, easily explained Payson's hurried departure from his office at just before that hour.

Keene decided that Payson had been alarmed on receipt of the letter, and had hurried to his office, there changing his clothes and effecting a disguise, and thence had hastened to a habitual rendezvous, to which McGee had intimated he should come at two o'clock. As the threatened exposure was not made to the police that day, it could only be assumed that the discord had been adjusted, and McGee pacified.

When Chief Watts received Keene's report that evening, he at once laid out a line of work to be followed.

"Since we now have him under our eye, it will not be well to arrest Payson on uncertainties," he said decidedly. "If the facts are what the evidence indicates, there is more to be accomplished than the arrest of this man alone. His confederates also must be taken, and the property stolen from Kennedy & Hicks recovered, if possible. To-morrow you had better visit Payson, and take his measure. You say the directory doesn't contain his name?"

'Neither his, nor McGee's," Keene rejoined.

"They probably are strangers here, then, and are making this a point to work from," continued the chief. "In that case your features are not likely to be known, and a visit will not give Payson any alarm. Invent some casual ground for your call, and see what the man is like."

"That may be easily done."

"I'll leave the details to you. Watch out that he doesn't fool you."

Keene smiled significantly, but made no reply to this caution.

He called twice at Payson's office next day, but not until a third attempt, nearly at noon, did he find the man he was seeking. On opening the door, he discovered Payson at his desk, engaged in writing a letter, and the detective did not behold quite the type of man he had expected.

For Payson was as clean-cut and attractive a man as one often meets. He was about medium height, with a figure at once compact and graceful. His face was smoothly shaven, his features regular, with dark eyes, a pleasing mouth, and a rounded chin. His hair was cut noticeably short, but his head was shapely and well poised, and there was absolutely nothing in the face of the man to suggest the criminal.

Yet the instant Keene came over the threshold, the color in Payson's cheeks gave place to momentary pallor. He rose quickly from his chair, smiled faintly, and said, with a voice as mellow as that of a woman:

"Good morning, Detective Keene."

Keene's immobile face had not changed by so much as a shadow, yet the change in that of Payson had instantly told him he was recognized.

"Good morning," he nodded pleasantly. "Are you Mr. Payson?"

"Yes, sir; I am," was the ready reply. "Take a chair."

"For a few moments only," Keene replied. "I shall not detain you long."

Payson laughed in a soft, genial way.

"You'll not detain me," he replied, squarely meeting the

detective's eyes. "I am not a very busy man. What can I do for you, Detective Keene?"

"How do you happen to know me by sight and name, Mr. Payson?" asked the detective, smiling.

"You were pointed out to me once in the street, and I never forget a face," Payson glibly explained. "Particularly when it is a striking and forceful one."

Keene's smile became a laugh. The attitude Payson was taking was that of a man already prepared to meet any ordinary move by the detective service, and Keene accordingly made no such move. He, in turn, at once resorted to strategy and cunning.

"You are complimentary," he rejoined, in his pleasant way. "I have called on a matter of business only. I have a young cousin out Avon way who is engaged in soap making, with a formula of his own. I have received a letter from him asking me to ascertain in what way he can advertise the cheapest, with the best results. He hasn't much money, understand; but he wants to waste what he has in advertising."

Payson responded with a low, ringing laugh, which somehow had a genuine resonance.

"Waste it in advertising, eh?" he cried, looking Keene squarely in the face. "If all men thought as you speak, Detective Keene, what would become of poor devils like Philip Payson? I guess we'd have to hoe in another row. Ah, well, perhaps your bark is worse than your bite! I will at least give you the benefit of the doubt and do what I can to serve you. Here, by the way, is a letter I just received from a party who can speak more highly of my method of advertising."

And Philip Payson, with the abandon of one without fear or suspicion, tossed over a genuine letter for the detective to read.

"And now, Inspector Keene," he added genially; "I'll do whatever you say. I'll answer your cousin's letter myself, and give him the benefit of my experience; or I'll give you a few points about advertising, and you can answer it. Which shall it be?"

"As I expect him in town to dine with me next Sunday, perhaps you had better talk them over with me,' said Keene.

He had no idea of giving up the letter he had prepared solely for a blind, yet which was now acting rather like a boomerang. He had no resource but to maintain his duplicity to the finish, and for a half hour he sat and listened to the suggestions and advice of Payson, not a little perplexed by his evident knowledge of the business and by the significance of the testimonials he took pains to produce.

Nor could he do less than thank him when he made his departure, remarking that he would return with his cousin's decision the first of the week.

The door scarce had closed, before Payson underwent a startling change.

"Cousin be ——! He was dealing seconds!" he fiercely muttered, under his breath. "He has tumbled to something! Has he run down the game? Has McGee peached? Does he suspect that I am back of the game, and that I—by Heaven! the stuff must be removed at once! at once!

As if time was too valuable for such thoughts as these, even, he suddenly sprang to the door and turned the key. Then he darted to the closet and began stripping off his clothes. He was very pale. His eyes burned with abnormal brilliancy. He was tremulous with haste and excitement.

Yet despite all this, his every movement was made with extraordinary precision and lightninglike rapidity, which displayed at once the natural dexterity of the man, and his wonderful concentrative faculty. It took him less than five minutes to effect his changes of attire and aspect. Then he darted to the rear door of the room, listening intently for a moment for the sound of any step outside, and again repeating in his low, quick, forceful way.

"The stuff must be removed at once! Who in thunder has set Sheridan Keene after me? Can McGee have blowed the whole game—or his she-devil of a wife? It pours when it rains they say. Let it pour! If I am not all in the wrong, I'll yet fool Mr. Sheridan Keene."

With a tread as quick and light as that of a cat he darted across the room and removed the key from the front door, then let himself out by the back, locking the latter behind him. Then he hastened down the several stairways of the dim and dusty back way, and emerged into the rear court.

But this man who was thus seeking the city streets did not resemble the erect, stylish, clean-cut man in the brown kersey, who had entered Payson's office an hour earlier.

This fellow was a man in a rough tweed coat, a woolly sack suit, baggy at the knees, and a flannel shirt in place of fancy figured linen. He was a fellow with a stoop of the shoulders, a droop in the poise of his head, a shock of reddish-brown hair, a lowered brow and less honest and open eyes, and a mouth veiled by a mustache which completely hid its pleasing regularity.

This was the man who emerged from the rear of the Arcade Building early that afternoon, with his furtive glances, searching every doorway, corner, and possible concealment, for a spy upon his movements. He could not guess what had occurred in his office the previous day, as he imagined that his cleverness was as great as the detective art of the man he now aimed to evade.

Yet when he emerged from the court, and presently started off at a swinging, half-shambling gait up Devonshire Street, Sheridan Keene, in a dark beard and steel-bowed glasses, was scarcely thirty feet behind him.

When alleviating the apprehension Mr. Philip Payson had inadvertently betrayed, on beholding Detective Keene enter his office, the latter had been thoroughly satisfied that, after his departure, Mr. Lipton Page would speedily emerge from the rear door.

This was the art and cunning of Sheridan Keene.

CHAPTER VI.

SHERIDAN KEENE MAKES A DISCOVERY.

The criminal and the detective, the pursued and the pursuer, might have been attached by some invisible thread, so perfectly adjusted were the movements of the latter to those of the former. For skill in shadowing a man, and evading not only his observation, but that of the third party, even, Sheridan Keene was without a peer in his profession.

Yet not once did Payson look back. Had he not felt sure of himself at the start, he never would have started.

He did not dream that Detective Keene had previously discovered his double game, and from that moment was scarce less close to him than his own shadow.

Payson shaped a course through Devonshire Street and Winthrop Square, then headed as straight for Harrison Avenue as the crooked streets of Boston would permit. That his destination was some rendezvous of his confederates Keene now felt comparatively certain. To located this probable dive was now of paramount importance.

At the corner of Beach Street, Payson suddenly halted, his gaze bent on a man emerging from a saloon across the new, broad square which merges into Harrison Avenue.

Detective Keene stopped also and asked a man at his elbow the way to the Union Station.

But even now Philip Payson had not turned back. He for a moment watched the man who had taken his attention, then suddenly started across the square, and presently called him by name.

"McGee! Hold up a bit, Darby!"

McGee turned quickly, and the two men met on the curbing, where they remained standing in a subdued yet earnest discussion.

Sheridan Keene turned his collar about his neck, muffling even more his disguised features, and sauntered around by the crossings to stare into a near window; yet he could overhear only parts of what passed between the two men.

McGee was a flashily dressed man of forty, with a good figure and dark features. His eyes had a coldly determined expression, his nostrils a mettlesome curl, his jaw was square and rigid, his lips thin and firm. He looked like a man of indomitable will and desperate courage when the occasion should require.

He wheeled sharply on hearing his name, and quickly responded, with a smile of greeting:

"Hello, Lippie Page! What d'ye know?"

Page quickly joined him, crying under his breath with some display of subdued anger:

"It's what I don't know that crosses me! Look here, Darby, have you tipped off the game?"

"Tipped off nothing!" exclaimed McGee, with a quick start and a frown. "Of course I haven't."

"You're sure of that?" demanded Payson, with vehemence.

"If you imply again that I am not, you'll invite me to wring your neck," McGee now answered resentfully. "Why should I blow the game? Didn't you fix things yesterday? Since I am not to be frozen out, it is not like me to give the thing away."

"Then your wife must have," growled Payson.

"Not by a long chalk! If she has, it will be her neck instead of yours."

"But you told me of her threats."

"And I told you she'd not execute them," protested McGee. "She knows well enough I'd cut her tongue out if she did. Don't imagine she holds ribbons over me! No, no, she'll not make a break; my word for it. What's gone wrong with you, though?"

"I suspect that the police are on to our game."

"Come off!"

"I've good reason to fear it," rejoined Payson, with an ominous shake of his head. "I cannot wait to tell you why."

"Where are you going?"

"Up to the joint. The stuff must be got away and put under cover. I'll take no chances of a search warrant."

"Who has tipped you off?"

"I have had no tip, but I know Detective Keene is after me on some kind of a lay."

"The devil you say!"

"Oh, I know what I am about, Darby," proceeded Payson, with a succession of emphatic nods. "I'll give him no chance to split me on a case. If he comes, he shall find nothing. I must head off any meeting of the gang to-night."

"Then there'll surely be nothing doing to-night?"

"I should say not! I tell you I will take no chances with him in the ring. If Keene were to nail the gang in the attempt, the jig would be up in this locality from that moment."

"That's true enough," McGee admitted. "If I see Skillings, I will warn him to keep away and lay low."

"Do so! He's the best known to the police."

"I will make it a point to see him. Are you off?"

"I dare not delay here too long," nodded Payson. "The stuff must be got under cover. This Keene is a wicked man to have at our heels. He's likely to set his teeth when you least expect it. I'll be ready for him before night, and then he may do what he likes. I fooled them from soda to hock, thus far, and I'll beat him along with the rest."

"Hold on," cried McGee, as Payson turned to go. "When shall we meet again, in case you are off on this?"

"I will know in a day or two," Payson lingered to reply. "I must be dead sure our game is not suspected."

"If there are no changes, mind, I am not to be frozen out!" growled McGee, with a threatening light in his coldly determined eyes. "If I am, I will make good what I said, and blow the whole business. I am as good a man in this as any of the party, and you'd ought to know it."

For a moment Payson looked the speaker in the face, his own grimly doubtful.

"You are all right in some ways, Darby," he finally rejoined. "I am not inclined to throw you down, but there are things you don't want to forget. While you are not well known about Boston, your face is pictured in quarters not pleasant to think about. No, I will not freeze you out; yet I don't quite fancy what you've been playing in of late."

He was speaking with a significance that brought an angry look to McGee's stern face.

"What's that to you or any other, so be it I know my business?" he demanded resentfully.

"You know as well as I do," returned Payson. "But enough of that for now. I will let you know when we are to meet again."

"See that you do!" McGee pointedly answered, as the two men parted.

Darby McGee hurried away in the direction of Beach Street; while Payson, swinging on in a half-shambling fashion he was feigning, hastened up Harrison Avenue.

Sheridan Keene, who had overheard parts of what had been said, and who now felt that he had the case well in hand, continued to shadow the man whom he believed to be the head of an organized gang, at whose door could be laid the robbery of Kennedy & Hicks. With the location of their headquarters, he believed that the arrest and conviction of the gang would be easy. Payson held his pace for a half mile or more, then turned sharply

into one of the side streets making through to Washington Street.

Keene, meantime, had crossed to the opposite side of Harrison Avenue, in anticipation of some such divergence on the part of the man he shadowed, and he almost immediately had the side street in view.

It was a wise precaution. For suddenly Payson vanished from the street, and disappeared into a basement doorway, with a celerity that would have baffled the majority of men.

But Keene had the house in his eye, and, without approaching it, he reckoned the number from that of the one on the corner. Then he waited until a patrolman came through Harrison Avenue on his beat. Calling him nearer, Keene made himself known, and asked:

"Do you know, Golden, who occupies number thirteen on this street? It's the house with blinds closed on the second floor."

The officer shook his head.

"I don't, inspector," he replied. "That house was vacant a month ago, and I have not heard who has taken it."

"Do you see any persons going and coming from it?"

"I very seldom see any one, sir. It's a little off my regular beat, you know, and I have noticed nothing out of the way. Do you suspect anything wrong, sir?"

"I know there is something wrong," said Keene decisively; "but I am not yet satisfied what."

"I'll keep an eye on the house, if you say so, sir."

"I wish you to do so, only briefly. Just long enough for me to run down to headquarters, and send a special to shadow the place. I will send him to you, after which you will resume your regular duties."

"Very well, sir."

"Take heed that you are not observed watching the house, and don't chance walking by it. I shall go around to Washington Street, also, and station an officer at the farther corner. Has the house a rear exit?"

"Only into the back yard, sir, with no way to the street," explained the officer. "The entrance to the basement floor is under the front steps."

"Ah, I see!" nodded Keene, now appreciating how Payson disappeared so quickly.

"Any other directions, sir?"

"These only," replied the detective. "Do not interfere with any person who may come out of the house, unless it should be a man or woman with a bundle, or package of some kind. In that case make an arrest somewhere away from the house, and take the party to the station. I will have an inspector here to relieve you within an hour."

The patrolman started to touch his helmet to Keene, but the detective interposed quickly:

"Don't do that, Golden! Do I look like an inspector of police? Who knows what eyes may be watching! You say that is Dover Street yonder? And South Boston lies in the direction I am pointing. Thank you, officer; I think I now can find my way."

CHAPTER VII.

A CHANGE OF PLAN.

Having informed and stationed an officer at the Washington Street corner, thereby preventing the escape of any person from the suspected house, Sheridan Keene hailed a taxicab and was driven rapidly to headquarters, where he made to Chief Inspector Watts a report of his discoveries, covering all the details.

Meanwhile two inspectors were sent to relieve the patrolman; and immediately upon hearing Keene's report Chief Watts determined to make an aggressive move.

"We will raid the place at once, Keene," he said decisively.

"That's my idea, Chief Watts!" exclaimed Keene eagerly.

"It can be done before dark," continued the chief, "after which Payson might possibly succeed in slipping out, and removing some of the stuff he is so anxious to get under cover. If the property resulting from the operations of this gang is still in the house, as Payson's words and conduct indicates, we will succeed in locating it."

"Easily, chief; and it certainly is now in the house. I know that from what I heard Payson say to McGee."

"You did not recognize McGee as an old offender, did you?"

"No, sir; he was a stranger to me. But I did not fancy his looks."

"We probably can reach him later, even if we quietly arrest all hands discovered in the house."

"No doubt of that, chief! Furthermore, there were others coming there to-night, whom Payson seemed anxious to warn to keep away. If we take all hands in custody, these others should put in an appearance as expected."

"In which case we will be ready to receive them," nodded Chief Watts, rising and taking his hat. "I want just a few words with Superintendent Eldridge, and then I will go with you in person. Four of us will be sufficient."

Following Chief Watts through the corridor, Sheridan Keene mounted the steps leading into Pemberton Square, intending to wait on the sidewalk until the chief rejoined him.

The winter afternoon was drawing to a close; it wanted less than half an hour to the fall of dusk. The last beams of the declining sun were tingeing with golden light the tops of the loftier buildings, the shadows of which lay darker in contrast across the streets and squares.

It was the hour of day when people were beginning to hasten homeward. The morning loiterers about the courthouse had gone their way long before; the civil sessions had adjourned, and judges, lawyers, and clients retired until the morrow. Pemberton Square seemed comparatively deserted.

A minute or more passed, and the chief did not return.

Then an incident occurred which, by its very simplicity, shows of what stuff true detectives are made; and how strangely a man of Keene's cleverness, even, may be misled by conflicting combinations of circumstances, as well as how quickly the error can be dropped, and the true and startling adjustment of relations be instinctively grasped and turned to effective use.

While Keene stood waiting, a woman abruptly started from the opposite side of the square and quickly approached him. He was so intent in thought, that he did not observe her until she drew near, and evidently was about to address him.

Then he saw that she was a woman of thirty, rather showily dressed, with diamonds in her ears, and an emerald brooch at her throat, her cloak being partly

open. She was not pretty, and in no way resembled Mrs. Philip Payson, although the incident suggested the latter.

Her features were sharp, her brow narrow, her nose retroussé, her eyes yellowish gray, with a subtle gleam of malice or selfishness in their unpleasant depths. Her lips too, were noticeably thin and severe, and were soiled just the least bit at each corner of her mouth, as if she had been eating caramels—or chocolate!

She at once addressed Keene, asking in a quick, decisive way, which was suggestive of subdued asperity:

"Can you tell me which of these doors I must enter, in order to find the chief of police?"

Sheridan Keene bowed slightly, then threw back his coat and displayed his badge.

"I am an inspector of police, madam," he replied pleasantly, yet with some decision. "The chief is busy this afternoon, and cannot receive you. What is your business? Perhaps I can help you."

The woman impatiently tapped the sidewalk with her foot, then made up her mind to answer.

"I want to take steps," she said, with more manifest bitterness, "to have my husband prevented from gambling!"

"Gambling!" echoed Keene, without a change of countenance, though his blood started quickly. "How do you know he gambles?"

"Oh, I know it well enough!" the woman cried, with resentful acerbity. "He never does much else, when he has the price of a stack of chips. I'll stand for it no longer, husband or no husband! And I've told him so, and that I'd squeal if he didn't stop it. Now, I want the place closed in which he spends night after night."

To a man of Keene's experience, the woman's language was a betrayal of her character and her associates. With no apparent interest in her, more than what her appeal might have aroused, Keene asked quietly:

"Do you know where the place is located?"

"No, I don't!" she replied, with unabated feeling. "If I did, I'd have hauled the proprietor over the coals long before this. I've followed my husband over Harrison Avenue way, but he always seems to suspect it, and he manages to give me the slip by going through some saloon. He has been losing money, and I'll not stand for it any longer. Money's too hard to get."

"I should say so!" assented Keene. "We don't know of any secret gambling resort in the city."

"Oh, there's lots you people don't know!" cried the woman, with a low laugh, more than half a sneer.

"As a matter of fact, that is too true for a joke," smiled Keene. "I'll tell you what you can do."

"What's that?"

"If you'll fix it so I can become acquainted with your husband, I will let him think that I'm a sport in the same direction, and in that way I doubtless can locate, if not get into, the place. After that, madam, you shall have no trouble from that resort, I promise you."

"Will you also promise not to give me away, and not to run my husband in if the place is raided?"

"I cannot promise not to run your husband in, for not to do so would itself be a give-away," Keene explained, laughing lightly. "But I will see that his fine is remitted to you."

"That's good enough, sir!"

"It can be done quietly, you know, and the place closed for good and all. You will not need to appear in the matter at any time."

"So much the better!" exclaimed the woman, with eagerness. "When will you do it?"

"I first must get acquainted with your husband, that through him I may locate the resort. Where can I run across him?"

The woman hesitated for the fraction of a second, as if something more than this alone was involved; then answered, with a sharp glance into Keene's artfully indifferent eyes:

"We have a flat in the Fairview, on Dartmouth Street. My husband's name is David McGee. But they call him Darby McGee. You'll often find him playing billiards in the hall under our flat."

"I will look him up within a day or two, Mrs. McGee," bowed Keene, with a grave complacency well calculated to dispel possible misgivings. "I am glad you have given us this information, and I will see that your husband does not suffer seriously, if arrests are made. There is one thing, by the way, that you must avoid."

"What's that?" she demanded curtly.

"Your husband must not know of this plan."

"If he knows, you will be the one to tell him, not I."

"Then you may leave the matter to me. I'll get at it by to-morrow or next day."

"The sooner the better!" Mrs. McGee exclaimed, with asperity, as she turned to move away. "Don't compel me to come a second time, will you?"

"That is not our way of doing business," smiled Sheridan Keene, raising his hat.

With feelings that words could not easily describe, he watched Mrs. McGee from out the corner of his eye until she had turned in the direction of Scollay's Square. Twice she looked back at him, but each time observed only that he was standing as motionless as she had found him, with his hands thrust into his coat pockets, and his gaze apparently fixed upon the pavement at his feet.

Then she vanished around the corner, and felt satisfied that her complaint against her wayward husband would be productive of only desirable results.

"All ready, Keene?"

The voice of Chief Inspector Watts brought Sheridan Keene out of his absorption. He wheeled sharply about, and startled the other with the words:

"All ready to advise a radical change of plan, Chief Watts, if you'll hear my reasons."

"What do you mean?"

"That I've been struck between wind and water, doubled up and tied in a knot, and left without pins to stand on," cried Keene, all in a single breath.

"You amaze me!" exclaimed Chief Watts.

"I am amazed at myself," cried Keene. "Come below and I'll tell you why. The wind sets from a new quarter."

They returned to the chief's office, held a conference occupying a full half hour, and at the end of it Sheridan Keene left the headquarters building alone. Very evidently the contemplated raid was postponed, if not canceled. Fifteen minutes later, Keene joined the shadow at the Harrison Avenue termination of the side street, of whom he learned that no person had yet left the suspected house since the entrance of Payson nearly two hours earlier.

That Payson himself would emerge before long, and

return to his office to make the changes necessary before going home, Keene felt absolutely certain.

It was then half past five, and darkness had fallen. The temperature was lower, and the night threatened to be biting cold. The electrics of brilliantly lighted Harrison Avenue burned with a gleam that was fairly painful, so cold was the winter air.

Sheridan Keene was right. He had waited scarce ten minutes with his companion, when Payson appeared as suddenly on the sidewalk of the suspected house as if, like the harlequin in the show, he had shot up from some mysterious region below. There was no mistaking that slouched figure, however, nor the shambling gait with which he was rapidly approaching.

"Away with you, Joe!" cried Keene softly. "Go tell Mack the bird has flown and the game is off."

This meant that both officers were removed, and the house no longer under surveillance. A radical change of plan, indeed!

Keene crossed Harrison Avenue and waited near to make absolutely certain that his deductions were correct.

In a moment Payson came into better view, and started downtown. He carried a square package wrapped in brown paper under his arm. It was like a covered box, about a foot square. He was hurrying, and his walk was now more natural. Evidently he felt that the darkness favored him.

Sheridan Keene let him go on ahead, then he hailed a cab from the corner of Dover Street.

"To the Boston post office, Devonshire side," he cried sharply. "Don't favor your horse!"

In less than five minutes he sprang down at the point mentioned, and paid his fare.

Quickly crossing the street, he slipped into the rear court of the Arcade, mounted the several flights of back stairs, and, with the key he previously had used, he let himself into Payson's office and locked the door.

Every move had been made with the decision and assurance of a man who, if his earlier steps had indeed been somewhat uncertain, and in error, now was absolutely sure of where he stood.

Five more minutes passed.

Then a hurried step, less crafty and careful than usual, sounded on the rear stairs.

Though the office was in darkness, the detective quietly slipped into the closet, and held the door ajar.

Then a key grated in the lock of the rear door, which was quickly opened, closed, and relocked.

The two men, detective and malefactor, were alone in the room, and a critical time had arrived.

TO BE CONCLUDED.

THE ELEPHANT'S THIRD COUSIN.

Since that cowardly impostor, the lion, has been dethroned, and the elephant elevated to regal dignity, it is no slight matter to be even third cousin to his majesty. Blue blood certainly flows in the veins of so near a relative, and henceforth we must see to it that the hog receives his due meed of respect.

But it is not alone his kinship to royalty that entitles the hog to high claims; he has a still more potent reason in a long and unbroken line of ancestry reaching far, far back into the dim and misty regions of prehistoric times. At a period when the horse still had three toes on each foot, when the elephant and rhinoceros wore woolly coats, when the mastodon, the megatherium, and even worse-named monsters made the earth tremble under their mighty footfalls, the hog, just as we know him now, rooted and grunted in the primeval forests.

We are so much accustomed to think of the hog wallowing in the black mud of his filthy pen, that it is difficult to fancy him anything different. And yet he is fitted for better things. A stupid, gluttonous, nasty fellow, you call him. Well, and who would not be a stupid, gluttonous, and nasty fellow if shut up in a small, dirty pen, and stuffed with food.

In some parts of France the hog is better understood, and by a very strange removal of circumstances is changed from the glutton to the hard-working instrument of the human gourmand. For some reason epicures set a high value on truffles, and truffles they must have at any price.

Truffles, however, are difficult to find, hidden, as they are, under ground, and the peasant might pass a week vainly digging for the precious edible, were it not for his well-trained, sagacious hog, which runs along in front of him, snuffling hither and thither until a spot is reached where the sought-for truffles lie hidden. There the hog stops and indicates the spot by a grunt and a vigorous thrust with his snout. Then the peasant digs with his spade, unearths the treasure, and once more moves on, led by his faithful servant.

Not long ago Sir Henry Thorndike, a sporting squire of England, made a pet of a pig, and, for want of a better place, brought it up among his foxhounds. In such good company the latent aristocratic spirit in piggy's breast grew with his growth, and ere long he showed that what a dog could do he could do. Spurning the luxurious ease of idleness, which he might have had for the choosing, he romped with the dogs, and, by continual activity, kept himself thin and muscular.

He was usually shut up when the hounds were taken out for a hunt, but one day he contrived to escape and follow them. He kept so well on the scent, and held on near the front so vigorously that he was thereafter permitted to go with the hounds on all occasions, a wonder to all who witnessed his performances.

Another hog developed still more astounding powers as a pointer. He would take the field with his master, a well-known sportsman, and would "point as true" as the best bred pointer dog. The moment his delicate nose—for, strange to say, a hog has a fine sense of smell—told of the presence of game, he would creep as near as he dared, and then stand motionless, with nose pointing straight at the spot.

Perhaps the most singular development of the hunter spirit in the hog is shown in the case of one of these animals now living in the northern part of New York State. This hog is very fond of fish, and as nobody would ever think of catching fish for him, he does it for himself. He wanders along the banks of the St. Lawrence River, intently watching the water; suddenly his quick eye catches the glint of silver scales. Like a flash he cuts the blue water, is gone a few moments, and then, inconceivable as it may seem, returns to the surface with his finny prey in his mouth.

All these are isolated cases, it is true, but they prove that with opportunity the degraded hog would probably show unusual intelligence. Who knows! we may yet have our pointer hog, our setter hog, our retriever hog, or our watch hog.

In the meantime we may properly render thanks to the hog for the good service he does us in killing vast numbers of rats and venomous snakes. As a rat catcher, no combination of cat and terrier could surpass him; and as a destroyer of snakes he has no equal in this country.

When he has a snake to kill he makes no great fuss over it, but advances to the attack with as much carelessness as if he were about to bite an apple. Even the rattlesnake seems to realize its peril, and at once endeavors to escape. The hog, without any regard to the poison-squirting fangs plunged despairingly into his cheeks, quietly munches his writhing prey with evident gusto.

For some time naturalists doubted that the hog could survive the bite of the rattlesnake, but it was easily proven in the same way that Benjamin Franklin once recommended another matter. Some French students once asked the philosopher if a tub full of water would overflow if living fish were put into it. "Try it and see," was the answer. Repeated trials proved that the hog could comfortably survive the bite of a snake. No doubt the peculiar quality of the hog's fat prevents the spreading of the poison.

Now, therefore, as legal documents have it, be it remembered that the hog is as we have made him, and not as what he would be himself. It is odd that the cow, which is almost a synonym for sweetness and cleanness, is naturally more given to wallowing in the mud than the hog. In a wild state the hog is usually scrupulously clean, while most members of the ox tribe take special delight in the mud bath.

The wild members of the hog branch of the noble family of pachydermator, or thick skins, are among the most heroic of all the animal kingdom. In Europe in olden times, the wild boar was considered royal game, and in Asia is still so held. The reason is, that with very great strength and swiftness, the boar combines dauntless courage and murderous weapons, which latter he well knows how to use. In China at this day whole districts are devastated and kept desolate by the herds of wild boars which the feeble inhabitants are unable to make head against.

In this country and in South America we have a terrible little fellow belonging to the family. He is called the peccary. No animal, not even the mighty jaguar, dares attempt to do battle with him. His teeth are double-edged and as sharp as razors, and as he always travels in bands of fifty or more, doing battle with him is not unlike falling into a bed of busy buzzsaws. With this ability to fight he adds an insane desire to do so, and consequently there is no more dangerous denizen of the wood than the tiny peccary. However, he puts mankind under obligation by his bitter and incessant warfare against snakes, which, but for this terrible foe, would swarm in the warm, moist country south of the Caribbean Sea.

In Malacca is the babyroussa, as large as a donkey, and armed with four sharp tusks. It is the terror of the country because of its strength and ferocity, and its cousin, the rhinoceros, is less feared than it is. It swims and dives like a dog, or better than a dog, and seems to really enjoy disporting itself in the water, for it there enters into games with its fellows, playing apparently a sort of tag or follow my leader. On land it is usually sullen and irritable, and wants but little provocation to rush out and rend the intruder into shreds.

The boschvark of Africa is held by the kafirs in about the same esteem as the grizzly bear is held by our Indians, or, rather, was held in the days of bows and arrows, when to kill a grizzly was a feat requiring unusual skill and courage. The kafirs make necklaces of the boschvark's tusks, and it is a proud man who can wear such an ornament about his ebony neck, for this hog is, like all his kind, well armed, or toothed would be more appropriate, perhaps, and seems utterly reckless of death. Another member from Africa is the wart hog of Abyssinia, about the ugliest looking and most wicked-tempered of all the porcine family, but, fortunately, the least formidable.

There are other relatives, but enough have been introduced here to prove that the elephant's third cousin is worthy of more respect than has heretofore been shown him.

A MONKEY'S REVENGE.

Near Tillicharry, in India, a remarkable instance of the sagacity of the monkey was witnessed. A few yards from the house of the person to whom the animal belonged, a thick pole, at least thirty feet high, had been fixed into the earth, around which was an iron ring, and to this was attached a strong chain of considerable length, fastened to a collar around the monkey's neck. The ring being loose, it easily slid up or down when the monkey ascended or descended.

When at the top of this pole, the crows, which in India are very abundant and singularly audacious, taking advantage of his elevated position, had been in the daily habit of robbing him of his food, which was placed every morning and evening at the foot of the pole. Although the monkey had vainly expressed his dislike by chattering and other indications of displeasure, he was quite unable to scare away the unwelcome intruders upon his repast. Finding that he was perfectly unheeded, he adopted a plan of retribution as effectual as it was ingenious.

One morning when his tormentors had been particularly troublesome, he appeared as if seriously indisposed; he closed his eyes, drooped his head, and exhibited various other symptoms of severe suffering. No sooner were his rations placed at the foot of the bamboo, than the crows descended in great numbers upon his provisions. The monkey now began to slide down the pole by slow degrees, as if the effort were painful to him, and as if so overcome by indisposition that his remaining strength was scarcely equal to such exertions. When he reached the ground he rolled about for some time, seeming in great agony, until he found himself near a solitary bird, who, emboldened by the apparent indisposition of the monkey, advanced to seize a dainty morsel.

The moment the crow stretched out its head, and ere it could secure a mouthful of food, the watchful avenger seized the depredator by the neck with the rapidity of thought. He now began to exhibit every expression of gratified triumph, while the crows flew around, cawing in boisterous chime. But the monkey for some time mocked their distress; he then placed the captive between his knees and began to pluck it with the most humorous gravity. When he had completely stripped it, he flung it up into the air, whence, after flapping its wings, it fell with a stunning shock. The other crows immediately set upon it and pecked it to death.

THE NEWS OF ALL NATIONS.

Peter Dubray, Heaviest Civil War Veteran, Dead.

Peter Dubray, said to be the heaviest Civil War veteran, died recently at Saranac Lake, N. Y. He weighed 479 pounds when he stepped on the scales New Year's Day to please a gathering of his twelve children and thirty grandchildren.

He was seventy years old, and in the Civil War was a member of the Ninety-first New York Volunteers. He was shot in an engagement and carried an open wound until the time of his death.

Breakfast Food Wins Bride.

A romance started by the insertion of an address in package of breakfast food has resulted in the marriage of Lawrence Peters, son of a wealthy farmer of Adams County, Ill., and Miss Ruth Sommers, daughter of a ranch owner in Wyoming. Young Peters was employed as a traveling salesman for a breakfast-food company, whose factory is located at Quincy, Ill., and placed his address in the package three months ago.

A Train "Boy" at 82.

The two oldest train "news butchers" in the United States run out of Sedalia, Mo., on the Missouri Pacific. They are J. D. Lyon, 81 years old, and William Kurtz, 64 years old.

Each makes a round trip daily except Sunday to Kansas City.

Twins Marry Twins and Then More Twins Come.

J. L. Swank, of Belleville, Ohio, claims the twin record for his family. His twin daughters married twins, and now each couple has twins.

Man 56 in Second Grade.

The oldest pupil in the public school, of Spokane, Wash., is 56 years of age, and is enrolled in the second grade, at the night school.

"I would rather not tell his name," said A. J. Simpich, principal of the school. "You see, he is a good American citizen, born in the United States, and a hard worker; a man who has had a hard row to hoe since he was a small child, nursing all the time the secret desire to have an education."

One Bandit Actually Caught.

The lone bandit, who has held up half a dozen railroad ticket offices in New York and Pennsylvania during the past few months, has been captured at Boston. His name is believed to be William J. Clayton. Railroad ticket offices and express offices were his specialties.

Caring for Birds.

In this time of the year, when, in most parts of the country, birds must be confined to houses, it is of the greatest importance that the floors be kept well littered to the depth of eight or ten inches with clean straw, and that grain be scattered among the litter to induce the work so necessary to maintain the health of the flock. Green food should be supplied every day. An occasional head of cabbage suspended by a cord at such a height that the fowls must jump to get a bit affords exercise.

Bees Sting Robber into Jail.

Stung by a swarm of bees, an armed burglar was arrested in the yard of the home of John Sampson, a farmer, of Fallsington, Pa. The sufferer yelled for aid and surrendered in gratitude when his insect tormentors had been driven away.

Sampson was taken by surprise when he saw the stranger fighting the bees.

"Save me," shouted the masked man. "Please do something. I came to rob your house, but these devils attacked me."

As he made the appeal the robber dropped his revolver and lantern. Sampson took him to the town jail.

New Motor-cycle Uniform.

When the 1913 riding season gets under way the motor-cycle army will be found clothed in neat uniforms of dark olive. This will result from the adoption by the Federation of American Motor Cyclists of an official uniform for its members. Soiled garments and hands are no longer a part of the motor cyclists' equipment—necessarily. The machine has reached the stage of simplicity of operation and maximum cleanliness, its users say.

Officials of the Federation of American Motor Cyclists have felt that the adoption of an official uniform would be of material assistance in bringing about a higher standard of dress on tour. Consequently, at the annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio, last July a committee was appointed to design one. Three different materials are suggested—two for summer use and one for winter. All will be dark olive. The summer uniforms may be of Roseberry or a material known as "shelter tent," which is less expensive. The winter uniforms will be of fustian, a material similar to corduroy. The coat is to be made Norfolk style, with pockets convenient for motor cycling. On each side of the coat collar will be woven in gold the emblem of the Federation of American Motor Cyclists on a field of blue.

Woman Sues Saloon Men for $20,000.

Agnes Nester has filed suit at Rockford, Ill., for $20,000 damages against twenty Chicago saloon keepers, including Michael Kenna, charging they sold liquor to her father, John Nester, so she was deprived of his support during part of her minority.

"Sinners" Use Siren Whistle.

An electrical horn, which drowned the screams of women, was introduced as the latest riot implement at Zion City, Ill., recently. The siren was sounded while fifty employees of the Cook Electrical Company made an attack on seven men and fifteen women, who as followers of Voliva, pray twice daily near the factory for the conversion of the workmen from smoking, drinking, and swearing.

Overseer Voliva's mother, who is sixty-six years old, was one of six women injured. Sheriff Green, of Waukegan, was notified of the disturbance, and the Voliva people expect him to institute an investigation with a view to possible arrests.

Several weeks ago a searchlight on the factory roof was turned on the praying band while it was stoned.

French Too Much for Kansan.

Victor Murdock, the Kansas congressman and editor, does not speak French. His wife and daughter are abroad. Recently, when near Paris, they wrote to the head of the family. In the letter they said their address would be found printed on the envelope. Murdock took their word for it and addressed his reply as per instructions. He "followed copy" down to the period. In his wife's answer he got a translation of what he had written. This was it:

"MADAME VICTOR MURDOCK, Hotel Grand Prix: Every room with bath. Situated in large park. Tennis courts alongside. Hot and cold water. Private dining rooms. Mourmelon, near Paris, France."

And the best part of this story is that it is true.

Miners to Demand New Law.

Declaring that the workingmen's compensation law is unsatisfactory, the United Mine Workers of Illinois will appeal to the legislature to have the existing act repealed and a new one passed. They also favor abolishing local mine-examining boards and would have the tests held by a State commission. The laws asked will be drafted and introduced soon.

To Dissolve Commerce Court.

Congress promises to have its hands occupied for some time in dealing with cases involving the purity of the courts.

The Senate has followed up its dismissal of Judge Robert W. Archbald from the court of commerce by agreeing to the abolition of the entire court.

The House judiciary committee proposes to investigate charges filed against Federal District Judges John C. Pollock, of Kansas, and A. S. van Valkenburg, of St. Louis.

Charges have been made against Circuit Judge Peter C. Pritchard and District Judge James E. Boyd, of North Carolina, in a report submitted by Commissioner of Internal Revenue Cabell.

Predict Wild Wheat Will Double Output of the World.

Professor Aaron Aaronjohn, director of the Jewish agricultural experiment station at Haife, Palestine, discoverer of "wild" wheat, which scientists predict will ultimately double the wheat supply of the world, explained his experiments with the plant before a scientific fraternity at the University of Chicago recently.

He declared that the discovery would revolutionize the cultivation of wheat in the United States.

The scientist said that many other varieties of commercial value had been produced at the experiment station, among these a

variety of the sesame plant, the oil-producing qualities of which had been doubled. The lecturer recommended the importation of other plants from the Orient, affirming that millions of dollars could be gained in this way.

One Hundred Detectives Dress as Women to Attend Ball.

One hundred city detectives in evening dress strolled among the dancers at the Arabian Nights' ball, at the First Regiment Armory, at Chicago, recently, watching for thieves. It is estimated that jewels valued at more than $1,000,000 were worn by the dancers, who depicted princes and portentates of other lands. The dance was a charity affair, given for the benefit of certain hospitals.

Mothers' Pension in Iowa.

Mothers' pensions are provided in a bill introduced into the House of the General Assembly, of Iowa, by Frank S. Shankland, of Polk County.

The bill would give mothers who are unable to care for their children a pension of $10 a month for each child. The State board of control would have charge of the distribution of the money.

The income for any child would cease as soon as he became 16 years old.

Two Carnegie Hero Awards.

The Carnegie Hero Commission has made the following awards:

The mother of Adam A. Oberst, who was killed at Carpenterville, Ill., in February, 1911, while saving Charles L. Carr from suffocation, was given a bronze medal and a pension of $25 a month.

John V. Hagemann was given a bronze medal and $1,000 toward the purchase of a farm. Hagemann rescued David L. Schluster, aged 33, from a runaway at Elgin, Ill., June 22, 1906.

Does Not Care to Travel.

Seventeen years old, Miss Liza Tucker, the daughter of Joseph Tucker, of Freeling, W. Va., has never been more than two miles from her home, a primitive Blue Ridge log cabin. A railroad has recently been constructed on Elkhorn Creek, W. Va., but, while the girl can hear the whistling of the engines and even see the trains as they pass, she has no desire to look into the outside world. She is nearly six feet tall, and is as happy as she is healthy.

Ex-telephone Girl a Peeress.

By the death in Paris of Bertram, the fifth Earl of Ashburnam, a New Brunswick girl, formerly a telephone operator in the employ of the New Brunswick Telephone Company in the exchange in Fredericton, N. B., becomes a peeress of the realm in Great Britain and her husband becomes the Earl of Ashburnam.

Major Ashburnam, the new earl, served through the Egyptian campaign, and also in South Africa during the Jameson raid.

He went to Fredericton several years ago and married Miss Maria Anderson.

Canadian Government Treats Indians Fairly.

The total number of Indians living in the provinces of the Dominion of Canada is about 105,000, which is about one-third the number of those who are the wards of the United States. The physical condition of the Canadian Indians is certainly no worse—and probably considerably better—than that of the aborigines living in the States. Yet the Dominion Parliament voted and expended for the last fiscal year the sum of $164,556 to the Indian service of the Dominion for "hospitals, medical attendance, and medicines," as well as $125,000 "for relief of the destitute."

The United States Congress, as the guardian of more than 300,000 Indians, voted $90,000 for combating disease among its native wards instead of the $250,000 asked for by the department.

The Indian Rights Association of the United States sent its secretary, Matthew K. Sniffen, to Canada a year or two ago to make a study of comparative conditions. In his report to the association, one of the things Sniffen said was this:

"The prime factor in the Canadian policy has been to regard all treaties made with the Indians as sacred and inviolable, and so far as we are aware they have been faithfully lived up to and fully respected. No Indian in Canada can come forward and say that his land has been taken from him without his full consent. Canada's Indians have absolute confidence in the government's good faith.

"Our Indians, for the most part, have very little confidence in the government, and any measure brought to their attention, no matter how worthy and proper it may be, is always regarded with suspicion, and is it strange when we think of our past dealings with them? As Major McLaughlin has aptly put it in his book, 'My friend, the Indian,' they have been treated as liars and cheats by liars and cheats.'"

Bill Makes it a Misdemeanor to Give an Alias.

With the avowed purpose of compelling culprits to use their own names instead of giving an alias, Assemblyman McElligott, of New York, has introduced a bill making it a misdemeanor for a man to use a name not his own. He says he had the gunmen in mind when the bill was drawn and that a man ought to be known by his right name at all times. He believes the legislation will make police work easier.

Gets Picture Taken in 1864.

J. D. Alford, of Americus, Ga., has received from an old comrade a memento of the famous march of General Sherman's army through Georgia in 1864. It is a photograph of Alford taken while his regiment was encamped near Dalton. He was second sergeant, acting as commissary sergeant of the hospital corps of the Army of Tennessee. Most of the soldiers had their pictures taken, Alford being among the number, but in leaving he did not have a chance to get any of the photographs. A member of the corps kept Alford's picture, with others.

Found it Hard to Sell Five-pound Note for Penny.

As the result of a wager, and to test the skepticism of the British public, a man disguised as a peddler appeared in the West End streets of London recently and offered genuine five-pound notes for a penny each.

Although he offered his extraordinary bargains for an hour, flourishing the notes in his hands, and crying, "Five-pound notes, a penny each," and even permitting people to examine them, the peddler sold only two.

Two Million Killed in Battle in Past Fifty Years.

A Bavarian newspaper estimates, after a careful review of the wars of the past fifty years, that over two million men have been killed in battle. Two conflicts which stand out above all others in the number of lives lost are the Crimean War, which is held responsible for 750,000 lives, and the Civil War, 800,000.

French Story of a Miracle.

Great excitement has been caused in the Beziers region, in France, by the report of a miracle.

Recently a woman went to the old cemetery of Beziers to tend her relatives' graves. She noticed that the stone statue of the virgin on the mausoleum of the Arnaud Palvagnale family was covered with moss, which she cleaned away with her handkerchief.

On returning home, according to reports, she touched her little paralytic daughter with the handkerchief, and the girl was completely cured. Large numbers of pilgrims now go every day to the tomb.

France Wants to Save Church Organs.

The reported recent attempts of American millionaires to buy French organs has aroused some discussion in Paris, and *Le Gaulois* calls on the competent authorities to take immediate steps to prevent these artistic treasures from crossing the Atlantic. It says:

"After taking our pictures, sketches, bronzes, and tablets, and shipping our architectural masterpieces to the United States, section by section, the latest caprice of American millionaires is to deprive us of our organs. It is now the pride of the New York Four Hundred to build an organ room in their princely mansions, and the palm goes to the one who is able to obtain the best instrument. Every one knows that France is the country of beautiful organs. There is not a church in the smallest town which has not one.

"Americans will, therefore, have a fine choice if the authorities do not step in to prevent the exportation of our instruments."

Crow Indian Probe Ordered.

A resolution authorizing the department of justice, at Washington, to investigate affairs of the Crow Indians in Montana has been approved by the Senate committee considering it.

Says There Are No Perfect Women Now.

Sir James Linton, president of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colors, in England, has been drawn into the discussion regarding modern figures as compared with that of the Venus of Milo.

"Modern woman is degenerate," he said. "She may be beautiful, but the mere fact that she follows fashions in dress is enough to prevent her from being perfect. That is why the Venus of Milo is the accepted standard of the ideal. She is perfect in all her proportions; every part is in harmony.

"Hundreds of models have posed for me, but I have never seen a woman with a figure comparable with that of the Venus

of Milo. The main faults to be found with the modern figure are due to dress. It is impossible to be in the fashion and have a good figure. A woman who squeezes her feet into small French shoes may be fashionable, but she has bunions and her toes will be found to cross over each other."

United States Losing Chinese Trade.

Grant Squires, a lawyer, of 40 Wall Street, New York, who has been traveling in China, came back to this country recently.

He said the Chinese were adopting rapidly the dress of Western folk, and declared that if a Yankee drummer with 50,000,000 suits to dispose of should go to China he could sell every one of them for $5 a suit.

Americans, Mr. Squires declared, were not keen to the opportunities offered in China and the Germans were getting the best of the trade.

The Chinese, he said, were becoming modernized, from the Occidental viewpoint, and were reading the newspapers.

Yale Team Will Not Play Army this Year.

For the first time since 1894 Yale's football team will not meet the Army at West Point next fall, according to the schedule of games recently announced. Reasons given for the change are that the Army game came too early in the season, necessitated a long trip, and was too severe a strain on the players in view of the championship contests with Princeton and Harvard. The move has been anticipated for some time. University of Maine appears on the schedule in place of Syracuse and Lehigh will take the Army's place.

The schedule follows:

September 24, Wesleyan; September 27, Holy Cross; October 4, University of Maine; October 11, Lafayette; October 18, Lehigh; October 25, Washington and Jefferson; November 1, Colgate; November 8, Brown; November 15, Princeton; November 22, Harvard. All the games with the exception of Harvard at Cambridge will be played on Yale Field.

Italy's Spoils of War.

Italy's spoils resulting from the war against Turkey amounted to $12,500,000, of which $1,750,000 was in cash, according to an official statement made public. One-fifth of the sum has been allotted to the invalid pension fund, two-fifths to the officers, marines, and soldiers engaged, and two-fifths to the national treasury.

Send Old Train Robber to Jail for Shoe Theft.

As Link Thayer, crippled from rheumatism, stood before a judge in municipal court, at St. Paul, Minn., and received a sentence of sixty days in the workhouse for theft, he smiled a little wistfully. It was a case of "how are the mighty failen." Twelve years ago Thayer was the leader in a sensational train robbery on the Great Northern Railway. He was captured and sentenced to twenty years at Stillwater. Now Thayer goes to the workhouse for stealing a pair of shoes.

"Lucky Thirteen" to Wilson Again.

Woodrow Wilson, former president of Princeton University, got his highest collegiate honor, the thirteenth day of January—the luckiest of the lucky thirteens marking his career. A diploma marked "elected president" was the "college" honor conferred upon him by the electoral college of the United States.

Monday, January 13, was set by law for the real election of Wilson as president of the nation. Electors chosen at the November election met in every one of the State capitols and cast their votes. Of course the electors registered as they were pledged on the November ticket, and the result has long been known.

Connecticut Man Follows Example of the Groundhog.

John Hart, a railroad man, of Danbury, Conn., has gone to bed to hibernate for the remainder of the winter. Hart believes the winter should be devoted to continuous rest. Hart has followed the practice for five winters. He says it does him a lot of good. During his hibernation his wife and family attend to his wants.

Confesses After Burying Husband.

Mrs. Albert Patzer, who told the authorities at Manawa, Wis., that her husband had been murdered by a mysterious man while Patzer was at supper, has now confessed she was the slayer. Her arrest took place while she was driving home from the funeral of her husband.

Patzer's thirteen children, District Attorney Califsen, and District Attorney Coles were at the funeral. Mrs. Patzer assisted in the burial, throwing flowers into the grave. After her arrest she said she killed Patzer with a piece of stove wood.

Poorly Paid Teachers.

According to a report just made public, giving the latest study by the Russell Sage Foundation of an interstate comparison of school systems, school-teachers of the United States are not getting rich very fast. The report sets forth, among other things, that in eighteen out of the forty-eight States the average annual wage of public school-teachers is less than one dollar a day, and that one State rents its convicts for more than it pays its teachers; that the United States has the shortest school year in the world; that American public schools burn down at the rate of one for every school day in the year; that the amount per child invested in school property ranges from $4 in Mississippi to $115 in Massachusetts, and that the providing of free text books in one State resulted in a 10 per cent increase in high-school attendance.

Rhode Island has the longest school year of any State—193 days—but if these 193 days of schooling were divided equally among the children of school age in the State, the result would be 116 days of schooling each. The report terms this the "effective school year," and compares the forty-eight States on that basis. In nearly a quarter of the States the effective school year is less than three months.

As a nation, the United States has a shorter school day, a shorter school week, and a shorter school year than any other highly civilized country in the world. American expenditures for public education have more than doubled in the past ten years, according to the bulletin. To-day the people of the United States spend nearly half a billion dollars a year on their public schools. The expenditures per child of school age range all the way from $3 in South Carolina to $32. in Washington.

According to the report, the average wage of carpenters in the United States is about $802, of coal miners $600, of factory workers $550, of common laborers $513, and of teachers $485.

In several Southern States rural teachers earn less than $150 per year. In one New England State hundreds of teachers earn less than $6 per week. In one county in a Central Atlantic State the average for all teachers is $120 per year. One Southern State rents its convicts to contractors at a little more than $400 per year, while it pays its public school-teachers slightly over $300.

Medical inspection of school is provided for by laws of twenty States.

Thirty-six States have State-wide compulsory attendance laws. Compulsory education began in Germany and Massachusetts in the seventeenth century, and in France and more than half of the States of the Union in the nineteenth century.

In general all-round efficiency the report places Washington first among the States of the Union, with Massachusetts a close second and New York third.

Carry Off White Women.

An insurrection has begun among the natives of Angola, Portuguese West Africa, according to dispatches received by the minister of the colonies.

The natives are said to have committed many atrocities. They raided several settlements, killing and burning the inhabitants and pillaging their property. Several European women are said to have been carried off by the insurgents, who are charged with burning four men alive.

The governor of the colony has sent an expedition to suppress the insurrection.

Firecrackers Tied to Pigeon's Leg Starts Stable Blaze.

It was not an incendiary who fired Otto Colliery's big stables, at Branchdale, Pa., as heretofore supposed. It was a smart chap at a shooting match who attached firecrackers to a pigeon's legs and set them off so the bird would be too lively for a rival to shoot.

The pigeon got safely away from the gunner and flew to the stables, with part of the burning crackers still attached. When the bird alighted the hay was ignited, and a loss of $6,000 followed.

Women Make Daring Break from Jail.

Swinging on a rope made of braided strips of blankets, two women prisoners, during a blinding snowstorm, let themselves down from a high second-story window of the city jail at Ogden, Utah, and escaped.

Mrs. Mary McGill, convicted of aiding her husband in robbing a man, and Mabel Wilson, sentenced for vagrancy, are the women. McGill broke jail in a similar manner a short time ago.

Many Gave Pennies to Help Idaho Editors.

Released from jail after having served ten-day sentences for contempt of court, R. S. Sheridan and C. O. Broxton, publisher and editor of the *Capital News*, of Boise, Idaho, and A. R. Cruzen, a stockholder, found that from every State in the Union had come 1-cent contributions to pay the $500 fines assessed by the court. Half the necessary amount has been re-

ceived. The Idaho supreme court sentenced the men for publishing a message from Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, criticizing the court.

Works for Fifty Years to Buy Memorial for Husband.

In the church at Bremgarten, in the Canton of Argovis, Switzerland, a clock that has cost $4,100 has just been placed, the gift of an old woman who labored for fifty years to save the money to pay for it. The clock has been put in the steeple of the church, and when it was installed all the officials of the village took part in the ceremony.

The old woman who gave the clock is 76 years of age. Her husband died when she was 24. She was then the village beauty, but instead of marrying again—her husband had left her penniless—she earned her own living by working as a household servant or in the fields.

She toiled for half a century, and obtained the reputation among the villagers of being a miser. The object of her self-denial was revealed when she presented the clock as a memorial of her husband to the village, and now, instead of being an object of ridicule, she is the heroine of the place.

Gets Warm in Cold-storage Plant.

Lem Tucker, of New York, broke into a cold-storage plant in Hutchinson, Kan., in order to keep warm. When Tucker was found he said:

"I was looking for a warm place and that is the first place that I came to that looked warm."

The room where Tucker took refuge is kept at a temperature of 32 degrees above zero, but outside the thermometer registered 20 degrees below zero. Tucker was not arrested.

This Dog Swallows Stones.

Rivaling Don Quixote's famous bear story, is a report concerning Eddie Woodward's dog Jack, which amuses the youngsters in the neighborhood of Penn Street, Glendale, Cal., by swallowing stones.

The dog, it is asserted, gulps down pebbles thrown at it by the boys.

When its peculiar canine appetite is satisfied, if is gravely declared, the boys use the dog as a rattle box, tapping the animal lightly amidships of its forelegs and the supposed location of its digestive apparatus.

German Army Duels O. K.

The federal council, of Germany, has been debating for some time the resolution of the Reichstag adopted in May, 1912, calling upon the imperial chancellor to put an end to dueling in the army. Its decision, which was presented to the Reichstag recently, is tantamount to a refusal to do anything.

Lone Man Robs Mail Car.

A lone bandit rifled the mail car of passenger train No. 12 on the Southern Railway near Riverside, Ala., recently, and escaped with many registered packages.

It is believed the bandit boarded the train at Lincoln, Ala., when a stop was made for water. Soon after he gained entrance to the mail car through an end door and quickly covered E. L. Cragmen, and Bailey, mail clerks, with a revolver. He demanded that the clerks hand over to him all the registered mail while he closely followed them. As the train slowed down for the Riverside stop he leaped from the car and escaped into the rugged country of that section.

Cragmen furnished a description of the robber, and railroad detectives, aided by residents of the Riverside section, searched the country, but without avail.

For Asiatic Exclusion.

Senator J. B. Sanford, of Ukiah, Democratic national committeeman for California, introduced a joint resolution in the California legislature recently favoring Asiatic exclusion as proposed by a bill introduced in Congress by Representative Raker, of California. The resolution says that there is misapprehension in the East as to California's opinion regarding Oriental immigration.

Steals a Stove to Save Himself from Freezing.

It was a cold day in Chicago and Thomas Mason shivered as he crawled from his bed into his bare, icy room. There was no stove in the place. He had no money with which to buy one. He found one in front of a hardware store, and like his namesake, "Tom, Tom, the Piper's son," he stole the stove and "away he run." The stove was heavy, and it kept growing heavier all the time. Mason was helpless when the proprietor caught him, and the police took him away. Mason was sent to jail for thirty days.

Goes to Jail to Dodge Dog Tax.

Declaring he would rather go to jail than pay a $5 dog tax, Attorney Duncan McPhail, of Denver, Colo., who for several months has been in litigation over his dog Daisy, during which time the municipal, county, and supreme courts have taken a hand in the case, has voluntarily entered upon a term in a cell in the county jail. He said he would serve out his fine and costs, amounting to more than $46, in the city jail. This means an incarceration of 23 days.

Naval Actress Tricks Suitor.

The jealousy of a young actress was the cause of a highly amusing incident at a restaurant in Lisbon, Portugal, recently.

For some time a naval officer had been the accepted suitor of the actress, but she had broken off the engagement. The naval officer, with a beautiful girl, entered the restaurant and ordered dinner for two. The couple sat at a small table and were observed talking together affectionately. Soon afterward the actress entered. As her eyes fell on the officer and the girl she stopped short, but, regaining her self-possession, proceeded to a table and ordered dinner. She viewed with irritation and jealousy the two opposite, who, apparently oblivious of her presence, were engrossed in each other.

At last, unable to restrain herself at the sight of her rival's triumph, the actress rushed at the girl as she rose to leave the restaurant, and seized her by her beautiful golden hair. To her astonishment the hair came away in her hands, and hat and veil attached to it, and the face of a middy from the officer's ship was revealed, amid roars of laughter from all present.

The discomfited actress burst into tears, and, covering her face with her hands, fell back on a chair. Friends tried to reconcile the actress and the officer as the masquerade had proved successfully that she still cared for her former suitor.

Travel by Dog Team to Legislature.

A furious blizzard was raging a short time ago at Nome, Alaska, when Territorial Senator Conrad Freeding and Representative T. G. Gaffney and Frank Aldrich left Nome to attend the session of the Alaska legislature, which convened at Juneau. The men traveled 2,000 miles by dog team to Cordova, where they took a steamer to Juneau.

Produces Cancer in Healthy Body.

Professor Johannes Fibiger, who holds the chair of pathological anatomy in the University of Copenhagen, speaking before a medical society, stated that he had been able for the first time in history to create cancer in a sound body by other than external irritation. His announcement caused a decided stir. Doctor Fibiger experimented on cockroaches in whom he developed nematodes. Then he fed rats with the infected cockroaches. In the stomach of the rats cancer swellings were evident soon afterward. The experiments of Doctor Fibiger, who is a man of high scientific attainments, are still in the first stage. Great secrecy is to be observed as to future developments.

Would Publish New York's Needs.

A municipal bureau to inform farmers all over the country of the demands of the New York produce markets and the best methods of packing, preparing, and transporting their products so as to reach the dealers and consumers in prime condition, has been urged by Mrs. Elmer Black, a member of Mayor Gaynor's market commission advisory board. Mrs. Black's recommendation was made at a hearing of the commission on the advisability of establishing a great terminal market to relieve the congestion of freight cars which, it was stated, were sometimes held in freight yards for a week or more before their contents, because of lack of terminal accommodations, could be delivered to the consignees. It was charged that these delays resulted in large amounts of foodstuffs spoiling in transit and affording the dealers an opportunity to maintain prices artificially.

Mrs. Black visited the municipal markets of the larger cities of Europe last summer, and reported to the commission that in her opinion the city could profit by European experiences and greatly reduce the price of foodstuffs by the establishment of a great central market or produce terminal.

Panama Canal Will Make Dry Dock Necessary at Kingston.

A Canadian syndicate is negotiating with the local government for the right to build a big dry dock in Kingston, Jamaica, harbor.

The dry dock will be built to meet the needs which will be occasioned by the opening of the Panama Canal.

Captures Cow on City Street With Lasso.

"Wild West" tactics were employed to capture a cow which had strayed into the business district, in Cincinnati, Ohio. The animal, which had long horns, took possession of a part of the sidewalk on the north side of the street and terrified many women

shoppers, who fled at the sight of the cow. Occasionally it would hesitate in its wanderings and gaze into the store windows at the latest "creations."

The cow was having things much her own way running up and down the sidewalk until John Langdon, a teamster, happened to come upon the scene. After seeing how unsuccessful others had been in their attempts to catch the animal, Langdon secured a long rope which he had in the wagon, tied a loop at one end of the rope, and arranged a lasso in true Western style.

Approaching the cow as near as possible he twirled the lasso, and then let it go. The lasso gathered gracefully about the cow's neck, and in her effort to flee it became tighter. Langdon took the animal home, where it awaits the owner.

Recently Established Facts.

Earth excavated from the Panama Canal is sufficient to build sixty-three pyramids the size of that of Cheops, in Egypt.

The United States has 180,000 dry-goods stores.

An electrically driven machine to split kindling wood is a recent invention.

Exports from the United States to Canada now average $1,000,000 a day.

A Washington man has patented a rubber stamp especially designed for dating eggs.

Jeremiah Bancroft, 88, of Douglas, Mass., is the last chief of the vanishing Ponkapoag Indians.

Pastor Peter Miller, of Rio, W. Va., age 85, rides twenty-five miles every Sunday to conduct preaching services.

Idria, a small town in Austria, has a feminine fire brigade, the members of which wear uniforms and helmets.

Empress Augusta, of Germany, is so afraid of airships that she has had them forbidden to fly over royal residences.

Switzerland is building a new railroad 13.5 per cent of the line of which will be through tunnels and 6 per cent over bridges.

The back of a new couch hammock that a Wisconsin man has patented is so mounted that it adjusts itself to the angle at which an occupant may be sitting or reclining.

Daring Rescue.

Going full speed, L. C. Hardaman steered his automobile with one hand in front of an interurban electric car, at Los Angeles, Cal., and with his other hand snatched Miss Fay Murphy almost from under the wheels of the big car. An instant later car and automobile collided. The automobile was wrecked, but Hardaman and Miss Murphy were not injured.

England to Get Her Convict Genius.

John R. Wilmot, scientist, author, inventor, and promoter, who recently was paroled from the Joliet, Ill., penitentiary after serving five and one-half years of a seven-year sentence for forgery, is in the county jail in Chicago awaiting an order from Washington for his deportation to England.

Wilmot, who holds degrees from English universities, was arraigned before Doctor Percy L. Prentiss, immigration inspector, and his presence in this country was held to be undesirable.

In the penitentiary Wilmot laid the foundation for several inventions of monetary value, one being a gas machine and another a smoke consumer. Being a convict, he could not patent them, but he planned to float a company as soon as he was paroled. When he stepped from the penitentiary door he was arrested. The main point against him was his criminal record. In England he was known as Tom Crawshaw.

Search for Gold Hidden in Old Bottles.

Nearly a dozen men have been searching in the hills of Trinity County, Cal., for a fortune in gold dust worth $84,000, buried in champagne bottles in 1852. Several attempts previously have been made to find the gold, and newly found information, the source of which has not been disclosed, has again set the treasure hunters on the old quest.

Arnold Smith, who had a tavern at Junction City, accumulated the gold dust as the current medium of exchange of the time, and lacking a safe kept it hidden in champagne bottles in his cellar. The murder of Smith by Andrew Johnson and James Martin, a negro, and the theft of the gold, is a part of Trinity County history.

Johnson later killed the negro and buried the dust. A few years ago he died in Salt Lake City, Utah, confessing his crime, and leaving a map showing where the gold was buried.

Takes New Tuberculosis Cure.

Mrs. Walter S. Powell, of Boston, has been inoculated with the Friedman tuberculosis bacilli. She was the first American to be treated at the institute in Germany of Doctor Frederick Friedman, discoverer of the purported consumption cure. She was accompanied to the institute by her husband, who declared that he would inform Americans through the press whether or not the cure was what Doctor Friedman claimed it to be.

Smarting under newspaper criticism of his refusal to give away any of his bacilli, Doctor Friedman explained that the administration of the cure by inoculation was a delicate technical operation that required instruction, which as yet he had not found time to give.

He offered to give the American government every opportunity to investigate his cure, but said at least three months should be devoted to a comprehensive inquiry.

Rescue 880 After Liner Hits Reef.

Eight hundred and eighty passengers, men, women, and children, were safely taken from deadly peril after the liner *Uranium* had gone on a reef near Chebucio Head light. Not a life was lost in the transfer of the passengers to the rescue boats and all have now been sent on to their destinations by train. The liner *Atlantic* went on the same reef nearly forty years ago, and more than 600 persons were drowned.

In the violent storm which had prevailed off the coast for several days, the *Uranium* was blown out of her course and plunged bow on into this graveyard of ships. Her plates were caved in and she began taking water rapidly. Fog hemmed her in and the wind blew with hurricane force. Between her decks more than 600 immigrants from the north of Europe—Russians, Poles, Hollanders—were thrown into momentary panic.

The crash against the rocks shook the giant ship from bow to stern. By scores the affrighted passengers began pouring up the companionways to the decks, over which heavy seas were constantly breaking. Captain Eustace, from the bridge, took command of the situation at once. The passengers were ordered driven below. The officers, save those needed on deck, went with them.

On deck the crew was making ready the lifeboats, of which there were more than enough to accommodate every one on board. Everything moved like clockwork.

"Women first!" rang up and down the decks. Two-thirds of the immigrants were family parties. Anguished cries arose when the officers began to separate wives from husbands and children from their parents. Forcible separations were necessary in many cases.

Over the steamer's side the weeping women and children were lowered, with darkness coming on, the wind howling a dirge and the rain lashing against the sides of the stranded ship.

In less than three hours every passenger was transferred without the slightest accident.

Must Propose Marriage in Writing.

Representative Winfield F. Prime, of Winchester, Mass., is author of a bill which is now before the Massachusetts legislature, which, whether it become law or not, will attract wide attention.

Mr. Prime's bill provides that all proposals of marriage shall be made in writing, in order to be a basis for a lawsuit. He hopes to attain by the passage of the bill a substantial diminution of the number of breach of promise suits. All possible attempts at blackmail, he thinks, would be effectually blocked by such a law.

Would Have Men Share Care of Babies.

"I am such a sincere believer in woman's suffrage that I even believe men should share the actual care of the babies, especially the first few months of their existence," declared Sir Thomas Lipton, the yachtsman, in a recent interview.

"I believe most positively in woman's suffrage," added Sir Thomas. "How can any man, if he loves and respects his mother, refuse to care for her right of citizenship? I do not approve of the militant, meddlesome course the overanxious women have pursued; but why should we expect there would not be women agitators as well as men?"

For several days Sir Thomas has been the guest of friends in Atlanta. He left recently for the East.

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Received your Moving Picture Machine and am well pleased with it. My chum, Tom Neal, and I, together, made $12.00 in one night. Every boy in the United States ought to have a Moving Picture Machine in his home. There is no end of fun.—T. M. PIERSON, Jr., Welona, Ala.

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547—A Mystery of Two Passengers.
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551—Ralph Bolton's Double Plot.
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553—A Mystery from the Klondyke.
554—Returned from the Grave.
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556—A Bad Man of Montana.
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564—The Last of Mustushimi.
566—A Mystery in India Ink.
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576—The Dead Man on the Roof.
577—A Double-barreled Puzzle.
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